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THE RELATIVE CHARACTER AND MERITS OF  
THE CONGREGATIONAL AND PRESBYTERIAN SYSTEMS.

[At a period when in certain quarters it is fondly imagined that the Congregational churches are prepared to relinquish their polity in favour of Presbyterianism, and when, it may be, the unguarded remarks and unsettled notions of some professed Independents, have given colour to the fancy, it will be profitable for both parties to hear what a Congregationalist of North America has to say on the merits and working of the two systems. In the United States they do not appear as angry rivals, but as loving sisters, who have acted together as members of one family for many years. What is therefore written on their respective characteristics, in a highly respectable and gifted journal of the Congregational churches, *The New Englander*, may be regarded as a fair and fraternal exposition of them. We therefore transcribe the following able article from the number of the work for July last, and which we trust will be acceptable to many of our readers.—EDITOR.]

THE intimate union of the Congregationalists and Presbyterians of these states; their identity of faith; their fellowship in Christian rites; their free interchange of members and of ministerial services; the harmony of their views respecting the reform and Christianisation of mankind; together with the formal alliance, in virtue of which hundreds of churches have been organised, on a plan of accommodation, not strictly Congregational nor Presbyterian, but a modification of both; have contributed to confound the two denominations in the public mind, and to cast their distinctive principles into obscurity and neglect. In most respects this has been well. The two denominations have moved together in one spirit. In the new settlements

of the country, where neither sect had sufficient strength to plant a church with a permanent ministry, the members of both have uniformly united in covenant, either as a Presbyterian or Congregational church, or on a plan of mutual concession. Churches formed on this plan, were connected with a presbytery, but they were represented in that body by their pastors, and by either lay delegates or ruling elders, and were allowed the ultimate decision in cases of discipline. Happy indeed have been the results of this alliance! The members and the ministers of the two communions have everywhere greeted one another as brethren of the same household, and joined their efforts to make the Redeemer known at home and abroad without a trace of sectarian zeal or distrust. A beautiful spectacle of Christian unity! Robert Hall, ministering to his flock of Independents and Baptists, humouring the peculiarities of both, and binding them together in mutual confidence, presents only an imperfect example of what has been exhibited in this country, on a large scale, by these sister denominations. The origin of this close and confidential union, is to be traced to a conviction, quite universal with the Congregationalists and nearly so with the Presbyterians, that no complete system of ecclesiastical order is enjoined in the New Testament; and that the churches severally are authorised, by the Great Head of the church, to adopt any convenient constitution and rules, not destructive of the ends of a visible church. Their opinion was, that one form of government may be best, and yet not in all cases obligatory, in exact analogy with the state. Civil government is a Divine institution; yet if the democratic or republican form is the best, other forms are admissible. Civil government may *exist* in the form of a despotism, or of a limited monarchy. So may a church, with prelates or presbyteries. The prevalence of these liberal views is of quite recent date. The early expounders and defenders of Congregationalism were most of them strenuous advocates of a *jure divino* form of church order. They thought they found in the New Testament an authoritative model for the churches of all subsequent ages. To this they endeavoured strictly to conform. Whatever was *done* by the apostles and primitive Christians in the way of organising and governing the church, no less than what was *commanded*, they thought to be of binding force on all posterity. In their attempts to effect this exact uniformity, they appointed in each church a board of elders, embracing a teacher, whose duty it was to expound the text and doctrines of the Bible; and a pastor, who was expected to oversee the church, and to enforce by eloquent appeals the instructions of his associate. On the other hand, the Presbyterians were equally zealous to carry out in practice what they conceived to be the primitive and authoritative model of a Christian church. They would not brook the least interference from

the laity in the government of the church. They attributed all church power to its officers. While these exclusive views prevailed, no two sects were less tolerant of each other. But the planting of this country—the inability of either sect in many cases to enjoy the ministrations of the Gospel without the co-operation of the other, brought them into a union, founded on mutual dependence. Thus the poverty of the church in this instance, as is generally the fact, was the means of bringing in more liberal and fraternal views,—a good far surpassing the benefits of state patronage or of rich endowments. It is of great moment to the peace and increase of orthodox churches in this country, that the same views, and spirit, and conciliatory measures should prevail among the official and non-official members of both communions. The plan of union, though repealed by the Old-School General Assembly of the Presbyterian church, is still in practical operation, we know not to what extent, within the bounds of the New School presbyteries. And, in our deliberate opinion, whoever shall move an influence toward the disturbance of this fraternal intercourse, will incur a fearful responsibility. In every place where the friends of the two systems united can sustain the institutions of religion, but not otherwise; and wherever a single minister can perform the duties of a pastor to the whole population, there *one church only* should be instituted, composed of both Congregationalists and Presbyterians, organised either on one platform or the other, or on a plan of accommodation; and this should be arranged amicably, with a spirit of ready concession to the preferences of each other.

The natural course for churches organised on the accommodation plan, is, in the lapse of time, to cast out the incongruous principles in their constitutions, and conform, in whole, to the presbytery, or in whole to the Congregational platform. The history of these churches, it is believed, fully sustains this opinion. The fact is easily explained by the decease of the original members of the church, in indulgence to whose diverse views the accommodation was first made, and by the training of their successors under a common influence.

This ultimate resolution of the accommodation churches into regularly constituted churches, either Presbyterian or Congregational; and the continual organisation of new churches, on one or the other basis, composed of members partial some to this and some to that polity, render discriminating views of the two systems of direct practical importance. There are few subjects of interest, within the cognisance of all classes of men, less understood, both by Presbyterians and Congregationalists, than the relative workings of their respective ecclesiastical constitutions and the comparative merits of

the two,—a fact arising out of their exclusive attention, for many years, to the weightier matters of doctrine, and to church extension, or the propagation of Christianity.

Presuming it to be a question, not vital, but yet of some serious practical moment, whether either of the ecclesiastical systems before us deserves the preference, we propose in a few pages to exhibit the distinctive features of both. In doing this, we shall seek to be accurate in our statements of fact, and impartial in our arguments—our object being, not to create an undue bias in favour of either system, but to furnish our readers with the means of an independent judgment of their own.

To begin with Congregationalism. It is unnecessary to be minute in a description of this system. A few main principles give character to the whole, and afford a clue for logical minds to all the details of government and discipline. Congregationalism supposes a church to be a body of believers in Christ, voluntarily united for the social worship of God, and for the observance of Christian ordinances. Every such body it regards as competent to manage its church affairs, and to provide itself with officers and Christian ordinances. Civil government and sister churches have no rightful power to reverse its decisions; the one can only see that its measures infringe no rights of society; and the other can only refuse the hand of fellowship, for heretical errors or unchristian conduct. Each church is thus an independent corporation, for all the purposes of its organisation. The power of enacting by-laws, of receiving and excluding members, of electing officers, and of managing all the affairs of the body, belongs to the brotherhood. The female and minor members of the church, are represented, as in the state, by their fathers, husbands, and guardians—or by the male sex generally. The officers of the church derive all their power from the church, and their power is simply executive, not legislative nor judicial. A delegated power may be granted by the church to its permanent officers or to temporary committees, to do, in the name of the church, what they would otherwise have no power to do. But this power properly reverts to the church whenever a majority sees fit to recall it. On the same principle, the usage of the Congregational churches is, to elect to the pastoral office those only who have a competent education, certified by the examination and approval of some association of ministers, and to induct no one into that office without the counsel and co-operation of sister churches and their pastors. Yet the power of ordination vests in the brotherhood; for if to them belongs the right of election, which is the greater right, much more does the right of induction into office, which is the less. We have a parallel in the state. All civil power vests primarily in the people. In elective governments, they choose their rulers and have a right to install them in office in a popular assembly; but for the greater gravity of the transaction, they



commit the ceremony to the hands of distinguished persons, appointed for the purpose. The Congregational churches recognise in each other a right of brotherly watch and admonition; and in case of a radical departure, in doctrine or life, from the principles of the Gospel, a right to withdraw fellowship. They refer the trial of their ministers to councils composed of the ministers and messengers of neighbouring churches; to which they also submit all difficulties, in respect to which they need advice. It is manifest, that on this principle, in perfect consistency with the genius of Congregationalism, the churches of that order may build up an ecclesiastical system bearing all the features of Presbyterianism, *provided the ultimate power is reserved to each individual church*. Make the presbytery, the synod, the general assembly, mere advisory bodies, and the church session in all their doings subject to revision by the whole body of believers, and the essential spirit of independency will be preserved. In this sense, Congregationalism is consistent even with a prelatical government; that is, it may appoint diocesan bishops to oversee the churches, to ordain pastors, to induct members into the church, provided they act as mere executive officers, advisers and helpers of the churches, and not as their masters. No such organisation is likely to exist—none, it is believed, has ever existed—unless we except those primitive times, subsequent to which the bishops passed from being the servants of the churches, to be lords over God's heritage. But Congregationalism can make no farther concessions to monarchical and aristocratic forms of church government. She must maintain her fundamental principle, that each congregation of believers is, in and of itself, the sole depository of all church power and church privileges, of whatever sort. The moment she concedes this, she ceases to be herself—she becomes prelate or Presbyterian, or a modification of some such radically uncongregational system. The churches formed on the plan of union, are partly Congregational, because though connected with presbyteries, they are competent to the final decision of questions.

If, now, we inquire for the main principles of Presbyterianism, as we find it in history, and as it is correctly defined, we shall observe a marked contrast between it and Congregationalism, as great as that between the latter and prelacy, though of a less dangerous character.

Presbyterianism, as well as Congregationalism, acknowledges the parity of all ministers of the Gospel; which acknowledgment closes a door thrown wide open by Episcopacy, against clerical ambition and rivalry. In many other respects, Presbyterianism has, in common with Congregationalism, greater claims to public favour than Episcopacy. Yet a very superficial examination is sufficient to show that Presbyterianism and Congregationalism are far from being identical; and also which of the two deserves the preference—a question, however, on

which different persons may come to opposite conclusions, determined by their education and existing relations.

The Presbyterian church is distinguished by a confession of faith. Every minister and church officer, before he can be ordained, is obliged most solemnly to profess, before God, angels, and men, that he does sincerely receive and adopt the confession of faith of that church, and "that he does approve of the government and discipline of the Presbyterian church in these United States; and does promise *subjection* to his brethren in the Lord"—that is, as therein taught.\* Congregationalism, on the contrary, has no creed to which subscription and exact conformity are required. The Bible is the sole test of orthodoxy in her communion; and she welcomes to her communion whoever gives credible evidence of saving faith in Christ—notwithstanding some diversity of doctrinal views.

In respect to this and some other characteristics of Presbyterianism, as distinguished from Congregationalism, we quote below from a correspondent, on whose accuracy we place full reliance:

"It is true that this Confession of Faith does declare that the 'whole counsel of God is either set down in Scripture, or by *good and necessary consequence* may be deduced from Scripture;' and 'that in all controversies of religion the *church* is *finally* to appeal unto them.'† What liberty *individuals* may have to appeal to them, the system and practice under it, best discloses.

"Again: how is the Bible to be taken as a rule of doctrine and of faith? As the Confession of Faith interprets it, and in no other way; or else of what use is the Confession of Faith, or why make all church officers swear to receive and adhere to it? What do ministers of Christ carry in their pockets, and what do they take out and read from when they go to presbytery or to synod—their Bibles or their Confession of Faith? The truth is, this and all similarly organised churches must in reality receive the Bible, just as good Catholics do, only as interpreted by their church; or if they do not, they are false to their creed and to themselves. They '*sincerely promise*' to receive it so, whether in fact they do or not. It is in vain to think of taking parts of a creed so thoroughly digested, systematised, compact, and consistent with itself in all its principles. He that takes it 'as a system,' must take the whole of it, or he can take no considerable part; for any candid reader of that Confession must see that the idea of '*official authority*' is the central nucleus of all its principles of government. The book is a *unity* in doctrine and in form: always consistent with itself, whether

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\* See Confession of Faith, p. 378, Utica edition, 1824.

† See chap. i. sec. 6—8.

true or not; and to it every man who sincerely and honestly receives it must submit both his doctrine and his practice, Bible or no Bible.

"This is not Congregationalism. Nor is the idea of a church every where presented in this Confession, that democratic, congregational, and scriptural idea of a single body of believers worshipping and ordering all things in one and the same popular assembly. Far from it. A church in that book is the whole vast body of believers scattered over a whole nation, comprising a multitude of congregations, who come into the general body, not like Congregationalists to govern themselves, but to be governed by their superiors. Congregationalists hold that churches have no right to put themselves under this absolute control and guardianship of their brethren. Their principles forbid it, and so does apostolic church order. Congregationalism and primitive Christianity, place all church power in the hands of the particular congregations of believers in their popular capacity. Under Presbyterianism the great body of the laity are almost as utterly divested of all power whatever, as they would be under the Czar of all the Russias. They can neither receive nor reject a brother; nor alter nor amend their creed or their customs; nor call, nor settle, nor remove their pastor, nor even their deacons, for any offence whatever, without leave of their rulers. Whenever an elder or a pastor removes, or dies of old age, the people may *petition* presbytery for leave to call another pastor, or may meet and vote for another elder, provided those already in power should choose to call a meeting for such purpose, or consent to ordain the new elder after he is chosen. This may happen once in a year or once in an age; and when they have discharged these high functions, the laity have no more to do except to sit down again and be ruled: for not a single church officer, when once appointed, is in any proper sense amenable or responsible to them, any more than is the emperor of China. Napoleon, when once recognised as emperor, said, 'I am France;' and so the officers of the Presbyterian church, when once appointed, with far more truth say, 'We are the church,' and the laity cannot help themselves. Now all this may be perfectly consistent with Christ's repeated injunctions to his disciples, that they should not 'exercise authority over one another,' Matt. xx. 25; Mark x. 42; Luke xxii. 25; and also it may be right to tell of offences to the elders and church officers, instead of reporting them to the assembly, as Christ directed in Matt. xviii.; but it is not Congregational, nor is it in accordance with primitive Christianity.

"It would be difficult to set forth the proofs of these assertions, fully and clearly, without quoting the whole book of discipline. But perhaps a few passages will sufficiently show that the system is not at any rate Congregational, nor a system in which Congregationalism can be so merged. Chap. xxx. sec. 1, 2—read as follows:—

“ ‘I. The Lord Jesus as king and head of his church, hath therein appointed a government in *the hand of* CHURCH OFFICERS, distinct from the civil magistracy.

“ ‘II. To these officers the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed, by virtue whereof *they* have power respectively to *retain* and *remit* sins, to shut that kingdom against the impenitent, both by word and censures, and to open it unto penitent sinners, by the ministry of the Gospel and by absolution from censures, as occasion shall require.’

“ These church officers exist in, and constitute four distinct courts or judicatories of government and appeal. The *Session*, consisting of the pastor and a certain number of ruling elders chosen from the local church or society to rule for life. From their decision, appeals may be made to the *Presbytery*, a body selected by the pastors and elders from *their own number*, to rule over a wider region and with a higher authority. A *Synod*, constituted in the same manner, and with a still wider stretch of dominion and power. And over all a *General Assembly*, constituted still on the same principles, and stretching its final and irreversible authority over all the churches of the land.

“ Now it should be noticed that the whole of this vast machinery is made up, from top to bottom, of the clergy and the elders, of the appointment of whom the laity have not one word to say, except in the case of choosing a pastor or a ruling elder in their own church, should one chance to remove or to die, and should the existing session, in the case of an elder, not deem themselves competent *to rule* without additional aid. Nor is any part or portion of these church dignitaries responsible to the laity in any shape, manner, or form ; but their responsibility all flows upward toward the higher courts, until at last it terminates in a Synod or General Assembly, whence nothing returns to the ears of the people but the sounds of authority and power.

“ And 1st. The session or board of elders of a particular church have power to call meetings to add to their number, and to ordain the elders chosen—without which ordination they cannot act ; ‘to inquire into the knowledge and Christian conduct of the members of the church ; to call before them offenders and witnesses ; to receive members into the church ; to admonish, to rebuke, to suspend, or excommunicate ; to concert the best measures for promoting the spiritual interests of the congregation ; and to appoint delegates’ (from their own number) ‘to the higher judicatories of the church.’\* With all this the commonalty have but one of two things to do : first, to submit ; or, second, to appeal to the Presbytery, (a body which they, as laymen, have no control over, and no hand in appointing,) and then *submit* ; or they may go on to the Synod, or to the General Assembly, and then—*SUBMIT*.

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\* Chap. ix. sec. 6, p. 356.

Indeed, it would be difficult to devise a system, short of absolute despotism, more admirably adapted to teach laymen that most excellent grace of submission; and the system tends to produce this effect upon the minds of the whole mass of people under it.

"2nd. The Presbytery and higher courts 'have power to examine and license candidates; to ordain, install, remove, and judge ministers; to examine and approve or censure the records of the lower courts; to condemn erroneous opinions; to visit and redress evils in local churches; to unite and divide congregations; to redress whatever has been done in the lower courts contrary to order; to take *effectual* care that they observe the constitution of the church; to decide controversies of faith and cases of conscience, and all questions of doctrine and discipline; to set down rules and directions for the government of the church; and in general to order whatever pertains to the spiritual welfare of the churches under their care.' 'Which decrees and determinations, *if consonant to the word of God*, are to be received with REVERENCE and SUBMISSION, not ONLY for their agreement with the Word, but *also* for the POWER whereby they are made, as being an ORDINANCE OF GOD, appointed thereunto in his word.'\*

"Surely, this is far enough from Congregationalism! Who is to decide whether these official 'decrees,' are 'consonant to the word of God?' The very men who make them! First the Session decides, then the Presbytery, then the Synod, then the General Assembly: or to state it better, the elders and the clergy decide first, second, third, and last; and the people, that is, the church in the Congregational and scriptural sense, nowhere at all. The church in that sense is utterly annihilated. 'I am France.'

"The fact is, the laity can touch this whole superincumbent Gothic pile of church judicatories, with all their unbounded powers, only at the single point of choosing the elders in their own congregations as fast as they are removed from generation to generation. A man might as well imagine himself free in a state in which he was allowed to vote once in a century for a justice of the peace who was for ever after to be responsible only to those justices who, without the vote of the people, had risen above him, and then securely held all the powers of the state. An elective government, in which there is no direct responsibility to the electors, however it may be organised, must in its nature be not a republic, but a despotism or oligarchy;—a principle admitted ever since the days of Aristotle—at all events, it is not Congregationalism. It is often said that the Presbyterian government is peculiarly free; and undoubtedly the prevalence of the Congregational spirit in the new school Presbyterian church has very much modified the practical

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\* \* See chap. xxxi. sec. 2; chaps. ix. to xiii.; chap. xv.; chaps. xvi. and xvii. sects. 1 and 2."

operation of the system, and given it a free air not altogether natural. But Presbyterianism in theory and on paper, is no more free than Episcopacy or Catholicism. It is just as absolute, and just as irresistible and irresponsible to the people. In the Catholic and Episcopal churches, a man by the act of entering, in a free country, does in fact voluntarily choose for himself the church rulers that there exist, and to them he submits. By the same act, when a man enters the Presbyterian church, he voluntarily chooses to yield obedience to the several judicatories that overhang him;—and one thing more, he can choose a new elder, if one should chance to die, or he can petition for *leave* to call a pastor—and then *submit*. But as he enters the Congregational church, he appears in his own personal dignity—free to use mind, and heart, and voice, and vote on all questions that do or can affect either the faith or the well-being of himself or his fellows.”

So much from our correspondent, in whose light we see the points of difference and contrast between the Congregational and Presbyterian systems of church government. Which of the two has the highest claims on our approbation and practical adoption, may engage our attention for another moment. It should here be said, in anticipation of our conclusion, that it can rarely if ever happen, that a Presbyterian church, or a portion of its members, can be justified in pursuing violent and divisive measures to separate themselves from Presbytery, and constitute themselves into a Congregational church. Ecclesiastical rules and arrangements, though important, are of secondary consideration, when compared with brotherly love and harmony, with the maintenance of Christian institutions, and with the most effective action in propagating the faith. Our conclusion, if ever so indisputable, carries with it no obligation, except that of founding churches on the Congregational basis, in preference to any other, when higher considerations do not forbid it.

One main ground of preference for Congregationalism, is, the advantage which it affords in controversy with prelacy. Regarding the church as the seat of all ecclesiastical power, and its officers as the mere executive of its will, not its legislators nor its judges; and the obedience to those that are over us in the Lord, required in the Scriptures, to be such as in a republic we owe to rulers of our own choice, not such as is exacted by autocrats; Congregationalism is prepared for a successful encounter with all hierarchical pretensions. Presbyterianism, on the contrary, has, in her constitution, the same principle, which in prelatical churches has so often subjected the laity to a crushing spiritual despotism. So far as power and authority are concerned, the elders, not the brotherhood as a body, are the church. A remarkable advantage was gained, from this source, by Dr. Wainwright, in the late controversy between him and Dr. Potts on the question, Whether there can be a church without a bishop? Dr.

Potts conceded to his Episcopal opponent, that a church cannot exist without officers. In this concession he was consistent with the theory of Presbyterianism, though we doubt whether the body of new school Presbyterians would make it. If the Church Session, the Presbytery, the Synod, the General Assembly, are the church, and the depositories of all church power, by Divine appointment, then there cannot be a church without bishops or a bishop—and if not, why may not a *diocesan* bishop be essential to the being of a church? Congregationalism makes no such fatal concession to clerical claims. In her view, a church without officers is not indeed completely organised, but yet is a body possessing full ecclesiastical powers. It is the Congregational practice, (a practice, too, prevailing contrary to theory among Presbyterians,) for churches, whenever they are left without officers, still to act in a church capacity. Before proceeding to elect a new pastor or new deacons, the brotherhood feel themselves competent to receive and dismiss members, to maintain discipline, to keep the Lord's supper by the aid of any minister of the Gospel, and to do whatever a completely organised church has a right to do. That such bodies are not churches until officers have been elected and duly ordained, we leave for those to assert, who see the church only in a federal capacity, or in a board of officers; but we assure them, they are utterly disarmed of power to controvert triumphantly the arrogant claims of prelatical hierarchies.

Congregationalism has a still stronger ground of preference—we refer to its *practical operations*. It is often hated and opposed by good men on account of the facility with which error and disorder find a covert under it. Any company of fanatics can organise themselves as an independent church, and, refusing to submit to foreign ecclesiastical control, can hold an undisturbed existence, and ply their concentrated power to the propagation of error. But this, if an evil, is incident to civil and religious liberty. Were all evangelical churches organised on a Presbyterian basis, under the government of ecclesiastical courts, nothing could prevent, in a free country, the organisation of errorists on the platform of Independence, or even of Presbyterianism. Nor (we submit the suggestion) is it desirable, that error should be hampered by church fetters—or denied a free expression,\* an open field, a liberty of self-defence and of conquest. When truth is left

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\* In our free country the people are protected, and not merely tolerated, in political and religious opinions and professions of every sort. Ought it not so to be? Is it not best for the cause of truth? What can the truth gain by stifling discussion, or by dint of mere authority, condemning error to silence? Nothing but hatred and contempt. The day has passed when religious dogmas can be imposed on the world by papal bulls. Reason, common sense, sound logic, the Bible the highest style of reason, are the weapons by which error, in future combats, is to be conquered. The



free to combat error, it may not only be safely tolerated, but will be more exposed to decisive refutation. Error, moreover, when once nestled in a Congregational church, is far from being formidable; it is weak-handed, unlike error entrenched in a consolidated church composed of many congregations, and bound by symbolical books. It will wither for want of sympathy and support; and ordinarily live out only the appointed time of one generation. Creeds, constitutions, and ecclesiastical courts, above the churches, are far less pregnable fortresses of error, whenever ensconced in them,\* than single congregations without stereotyped articles of faith—stereotyped falsehoods, it may be. Congregationalism gives free scope to inquiry at the fountain head of truth. It goes with all religious and moral questions—not to creeds of human device, but to the Bible. This feature of the system is a fair ground, not of opposition and hate, but of approval and preference: for it is the basis of progress, the most sure and rapid, in theological science. A church whose appeals, in doctrinal discussions, is to stereotyped creeds, stereotyped errors perhaps, is stationary and fixed; or if she makes an advance in sacred knowledge, it must be at the expense of an *ex animo* subscription to her articles, and with the understanding that they are to be subscribed only for substance of doctrine. There is one supposition only, which can invalidate this claim of Congregationalism to the first consideration: it is that all biblical truth is already discovered, that all such truths are most accurately stated, that all are explained and vindicated in the clearest, most logical, and most conclusive manner, and that the stereotyped creeds are all free from error. Who dare assert this? The work of ejecting error from the church at large is probably an equal labour, to

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democratic or Congregational spirit has entered into the people, and not until they consent to be governed by an irresponsible oligarchy, will they submit to the authority of uninspired priests and creeds. Nor should they submit: let them think for themselves.

\* A hierarchy is capable of preventing the prevalence of error among the people, whenever they see it springing up, or threatening to come in; but suppose the error takes its rise among clergymen, the governors of the church.—How then shall it be dislodged? The ministers, who are alone competent, will not condemn and silence any of their members for holding opinions common to their body. Ecclesiastical history teaches a lesson on this point, which it is surprising we have been slow to learn. The larger part of Christendom, including the Roman and Greek communions, have been unable to exclude the influx of error, by means of creeds and hierarchies; and since the error has been received, who shall exorcise it? The popes, the patriarchs, the priests? Will Beelzebub cast out Beelzebub? We know he will not destroy his own kingdom. Equally sure is it, that instead of looking to corrupt hierarchies to reform the church, we must encounter their vigorous opposition. Were all the fallen churches of the old world simply Congregational bodies, acknowledging no ecclesiastical authority above the brotherhood, what a door it would open to their evangelisation by Protestant Christendom!

that of preventing its ingress. Congregationalism favours the gradual growth in the churches of a more intelligent, comprehensive, and pure faith. She receives from the treasury of Gospel truth, things new as well as old, and holds them fast. Her only creed is the Bible. That is infallibly free from error. What she there discovers, she feels bound to adopt at once, though it may contradict and cast out her previous opinions. But confessions of faith, taken as tests and standards of orthodoxy in national churches, must be strictly adhered to by individual members and churches, or their departures from it will be denounced as heresy, even though they may be scriptural; and they themselves be cast out of the visible church, though they may be members of the invisible. This fact serves to stifle inquiry, to suppress discussions, and overwhelm the advocates of truth with obloquy.

The practical excellence of Congregationalism will be still more admired for the promptitude and efficacy of her discipline. The watch and care of the church is borne equally by the members. No one is exempt from responsibility—and when a church censure is pronounced, it has weight and effect, because it is inflicted by many; not by a select few, but by popular vote, by public sentiment. And in the most exciting cases of discipline, where councils are called in for advice, the agitation is ordinarily confined to a few neighbouring parishes, instead of spreading, as under Presbyterianism, to every church of the order in the nation.

Many admit the happy working of this system in New England, and consider it the best system for all highly intelligent, well governed, and homogeneous communities. Yet they claim for Presbyterianism the preference in less cultivated and orderly parts of the country; and point us to the distracted state of many a feeble Congregational church—to its frequent change of ministers—to its divisions—it may be, to its disorderly proceedings—in proof of their opinion. The argument is complimentary, specious, and wonderfully effective: complimentary, by admitting that Congregationalism is the best system for cultivated society—specious, because the existence of feeble and distracted Congregational churches, surrounded by strong and well-ordered Presbyterian communions, is apparent, and to some persons inexplicable, except on the supposition of the non-adaptation of the system to such a people. We think we see whence this mistake arises. The stability and good order of a church depend much on the number and pecuniary ability of the members. In this respect the churches referred to are all deficient. Almost any uneasy, jealous, ambitious, factious member, has influence enough to unsettle a pastor, or to embroil his brethren in a dissension. In large and wealthy churches such disorganisers are not heeded, because not needed. Their malign influence is effectually counteracted by men of better views and purposes. Such is the relative position of the Presbyterian and Congregational churches in

those sections of the country to which we refer. The former are older and stronger than the latter. Change the materials of which the churches are composed, from one to the other, and the order and disorder would change places also. You would behold distracted Presbyterian churches, and flourishing Congregational churches. In a word, the evils apparent in the Congregational churches under consideration, spring from their feebleness, not from their ecclesiastical constitution: and we feel constrained, in view of this fact, to decline the compliment tendered to New England at the expense of our western brethren, in whose intelligence and competency to maintain the primitive government of the church, we have no lack of confidence. Where all those circumstances which favour good order and stability are equal, we are persuaded the Congregational polity will work out the best good of the people.

Yet the evils prevalent in many of the feeble Congregational churches of our new country look like a demonstration of the bad working of this church polity; and they are pointed out as such by men of sinister intentions or superficial philosophy with great effect. No other argument against Congregationalism, in comparison with the prelatical and Presbyterian systems, is urged with so much constancy, confidence, and success. Indeed the advocates of Presbytery, of the low-church party, who are not misled by the arrogant assumption, that Presbyterianism is divinely instituted and made the only authorised form of ecclesiastical order, are accustomed to insist on no other argument against Congregationalism, than its non-adaptation to an unsettled, restless, forming state of society, which makes it necessary for the strong and energetic arm of Presbytery to come in and restrain the extravagance of the people. Allowing the evil to exist, to the full extent to which it is imputed, we think it is to be referred to the feebleness of the churches, and not to their Congregational forms.

Another ground of preference for Congregationalism lies in the precedent, model, and authority which it affords for free and popular governments. It is a standing testimony from the highest authority to the competency of mankind for self-government. A church is a little republic. The people elect their rulers, and hold them amenable to their bar, or to tribunals erected by themselves, for their good conduct in office. They take measures for the due observation of the rules of Christ's house, enact their own by-laws, and see them executed. To do this requires no great learning, no remarkable sagacity, but simply good intentions, and sound common sense. They may err in many things; may practically deny their own principles; may do injustice; may lack efficiency; may act unwisely. But so may aristocratical and monarchical governors of the church. The wisdom of the great is often a less safe guide, in ecclesiastical affairs,

than the good sense of the brotherhood. The same remark holds true in respect to the state. The people are safer depositaries of civil power than monarchs and patricians. Are they ignorant? Are they vicious? It may be. Yet they have a quick eye to their own interest, and it is for their interest that government exists. The church under the Congregational form, suggests this great political truth, and sanctions it. It teaches mankind their true dignity, capability, and right of self-government in the state. The notion, now exploded, that a slave must be prepared for liberty by an apprenticeship, before he can enjoy the boon, is as profound as the cognate assumption, that free and popular governments are fit only for enlightened communities. Intelligence follows self-government, rather than free government intelligence. Give us freedom if you would have us value the privilege, and know how to maintain it. Men too ignorant and too debased to elect their own rulers, and to hold them responsible to their constituents for the faithful discharge of their duties! It may be. But where with equal security will you deposit the sovereign power? Who shall govern the people better than the people themselves? Who shall teach the people self-government, before the government is placed in their hands? Go to the church as she was in primitive times. What was the material of which she was composed? Was that material everywhere civilised, enlightened, above the inhabitants of our new states and territories? Yet even those early churches in a dark age, many of them gathered out of heathendom, were invested by the messengers of the Great Head of the church, with plenary powers to govern themselves ecclesiastically! They were competent. Where is the church, on Christian or on pagan shores, less competent? Go to the churches, then, for a model of what civil government should be—for a test of the question, in whose hands the power should be lodged. Mankind have begun to go. They have learned in the church their true worth and equality. They have learned the propriety, the art, the value, the right of popular government. They have found a precedent for such government in the house of God. There they have learned to depend on themselves; to bend to authority, and to exercise authority; and it would be surprising, if the idea of civil liberty and of republican government had not taken possession of them, and found them capable of exercising it. When would the Catholic states of South America have caught the idea of a government responsible to the people, the creature of the people, if they had not seen the light which shone from the land of the Pilgrims? And what government would the Pilgrims have reared over their own heads, and the heads of their posterity, if they had not discovered in the Bible, the precedent and the model of an elective government, immediately responsible to the people? It was a little Baptist church in the forests of Virginia that first suggested to

Jefferson the grand principle of our civil institutions. And it is the testimony of Hume, an adversary of Christianity, that whatever of freedom there is in the British constitution is due to the Puritans.

Such an ecclesiastical system deserves well of mankind. It ought not to be hated and despised as anarchical. It keeps things in their right place. It is potent for good ; imbecile for evil. It trains up the people to a feeling of personal responsibility, and personal reliance. It inflames them with an intelligent love of civil and religious liberty. It banishes error from the church by free discussion, and by a wholesome watch and discipline : while it encourages progress in Divine knowledge, by making the Bible the source and standard of faith. We commend the system to the favour of all. Not that an assent to these views should hurry the assentors, violently and tumultuously, from their hierarchical churches into a Congregational enclosure—but, remaining, if best, in their present relations, let them still honour the primitive ecclesiastical system, the mother of modern freedom : and let those to whom the opportunity is given of founding or strengthening Congregational churches, embrace the privilege.

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## HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF RELIGION IN WALES.

### NO. III. THE DRUIDS.—THEIR ESOTERIC THEOLOGY.

In all religions existing among those communities of men which have attained any considerable measure of intellectual culture and refinement, there are two forms of developement everywhere discernible, one of which may be called the symbolic and popular, and the other the dogmatic and philosophical. The former consists of a vast and heterogeneous mass of myths, and miracles, and legends, the joint product of a corrupted tradition and a superstitious fancy, fused and consolidated into a system by the art of the priest and the plastic imagination of the poet. The latter is, perhaps, usually the result of deep and troubled cogitations on the part of those to whom the symbols of the popular religion had become devoid of significance and veneration, and who were driven by a more penetrating and philosophical habit of thought to resolve the symbolic into the abstract, and to devise some form of faith more adapted to the wants of a mind, stimulated to inquiry by observation on the varied phenomena of nature and providence, and beginning to be exercised in the bewildering subtleties of moral speculation. In the religious system of the British Druids, there are manifest traces of both these forms. This will account for the widely discrepant representations given by two classes of writers, who have undertaken to depict that ancient faith, one describing it as a mean and degrading superstition, which held its sway over the minds of the

multitude by those fables and portents, the mixed offspring of terror and cunning, wherewith priestcraft has been wont in all ages to practise on the credulity of the vulgar; while others have discovered in it a severe and sublime theism, embodying all the principles of the patriarchal faith, in all but their primitive purity and entireness.

The fact, however, seems to be, that here, as elsewhere, there was a *religio civilis* and a *religio philosophica*,—that the elements of both the forms delineated did actually exist among them, though greatly exaggerated in either direction by the advocates of the respective theories to which we have adverted. Of their mythological system we attempted to give our readers some idea in our last number. But vestiges of a purer and loftier theology abound in those fragments of ancient Welsh literature, to which we have already so often referred, together with allusions to that sacred discipline, by which the Druids prepared their disciples for admission into this inner sanctuary of their faith.

It must be acknowledged that it is rather difficult to determine with accuracy and precision, what really were the primitive principles of that esoteric doctrine, which they taught to the initiated. These instructions were always orally delivered, and, like all teachers of an occult theology, they guarded the secrecy of their tenets by many imposing and elaborate ceremonies fraught with mystery and terror. "They teach them," says Cæsar, "to commit to memory a large number of verses, so that some remain under their discipline for twenty years. Nor is it deemed lawful to commit those things to writing, while on all other matters, both of a public and private nature, they use the Greek letters. This custom, it seems to me, they have established for two reasons; because they would not have their secrets divulged, and because they would not have those whom they taught, depend upon written documents and neglect the exercise of their memory."\* So also Pomponius Mela remarks, "Docent multa nobilissimos gentis clam et diu vicenis armis in specu aut in abditis saltibus.† They teach many things to the chief nobility of the nation, privately and for a long time—for the space of twenty years, in a cave, or in inaccessible forests." And Lucan describes them, as haunting "nemora alta, remotis incolitis lucis."‡ With this testimony accords that of the native records, with this difference, however, that they represent the teachers of the Bardodruoidic creed, as extremely anxious for publicity, and constrained to secrecy only by a regard to the public weal. There seems to have been indeed a system of moral and religious instruction, which they taught to the nation at large, and with studious desire for the general currency and practical prevalence of the maxims in which it was embodied, for

\* De Bell. Gall. lib. vi. c. 14.

† lib. iii. c. 2.

‡ Pharsal. lib. i. 453.

which purpose great popular conventions were held, to which the whole country was summoned by the blowing of a horn, as it is expressed in the laws of Dyrnwal Moelmud, "for maintaining, preserving, and giving sound instruction in religion, science, and morality." And in the great Bardic sessions, called *Eisteddfodau*, which are still occasionally convened, the entire publicity of their transactions is made matter of somewhat ostentatious boast. The form of announcement or proclamation for such meeting—which is supposed to be of great antiquity—is usually headed by the chief maxim, "Truth against the world," and ends with the declaration, that the session will be held "in the face of the Sun, and in the eye of the Light." In accordance with this, we are told, in the Institutional Triads, that "the three attributes or congenial duties of the Bards of the Isle of Britain, are, *to manifest truth and diffuse the knowledge of it*, to perpetuate the praise of all that is good and excellent, and to make peace prevail over disorder and violence." To this, however, are added "the three necessary, but *reluctant* duties of the Bards of the Isle of Britain; *secrecy for the sake of peace and public good*, invective lamentation required by justice, and the unsheathing of the sword against lawlessness and depredation."

If it were the case, then, that the Druids forbade their disciples to reduce their mystic instructions to writing, how, it may be asked, have they been preserved and transmitted to us, after the Druidic succession had ceased, and that art of oral tradition had been discontinued by which they were formerly delivered and perpetuated? The probability is, that, when the cruel policy of their enemies who invaded the island, had decreed the abolition of the Druidic order, their few remaining disciples, to save from utter extinction this precious esoteric lore, ventured so far to transgress the rule of secrecy, as to embody, in language studiously enigmatical and obscure, the main principles of the system. The form in which some of their old Bardic remains now appear, strongly countenances this supposition. Their style, both of thought and expression, is so abstruse and oracular, that no two of their modern interpreters decipher their writing alike. There are certain poems, especially, that bear the name of Taliesin, abounding in allusions to the metempsychosis, which occupied so conspicuous a place in their theology, from which,—beyond the fact that he describes, in his own person, the varied transmigrations through which the soul might pass, before it reached the circle of felicity,—no coherent idea can be gathered. The Rev. Thomas Price, esteemed one of the greatest adepts in the antiquities of Welsh literature, after quoting a passage from one of these poems, remarks, with a candour which it would have been more honourable if other Celtic scholars had emulated,—“With regard to these lines, all that I shall say for myself is, that if this was the fashion in which the Druids were wont to deliver their secret principles, it was very necessary for them to forbid their being reduced to



writing in order to conceal them from the vulgar; for unless the faculties of men in those days were far more penetrating than they are in this age, they might have given them the widest publicity, without danger of any one finding out the meaning."\*

There are, however, other authorities than these, from which the theology of Druidism may be learned. These consist of a series of Theological Triads, far more simple and intelligible, but whose real antiquity it is very difficult satisfactorily to determine. It must be admitted, that the men who have usually addicted themselves to the task of collecting and verifying such ancient documents, have been in general so blinded by their own enthusiasm, partly antiquarian and partly national, as to have been content with a kind and a degree of evidence as to their authenticity, which would have satisfied few others, in relation to matters so obscure and remote. It is difficult, for instance, to believe that the writers who transcribed and delivered the Triads from which we are about to quote,—though admitting that they derived the first rudiments of their doctrines from Druidic record or tradition,—did not enlarge and modify them to some extent, by the knowledge which they may have acquired at a later age, from other sources. On the other hand, however, there are several things which strongly corroborate their presumptive antiquity. Their theology bears so genuine an impress of its pagan origin, that they cannot be supposed to have borrowed much of their system from the light of Christianity; while the form and structure of the Triads perfectly accord with what is known to have been the mode of instruction adopted by the Druids. But more than all, perhaps, may we rely upon the fact, that the few specimens of the Druidic teaching which have been recorded by the ancient classical writers,—such as that which we cited in a former paper, from Diogenes Laertius,—are still found in substance and almost in form, preserved among these Triads. Having thus put our readers in possession of the nature of our materials, we proceed to furnish them with a brief sketch of the Druidic theology.

The Druids divided the whole of existence into three circles or spheres.

1. *Cylch y Ceugant*, or the Circle of Space, which none but God alone can pervade, the one supreme, mysterious, eternal Existence—the Author of life and the Universal Governor, who pervades all things. It is his special prerogative to possess endless life, without the necessity or desire of change. His benevolence is so great, that he has ordained every being ultimately to attain to a state of perfection and blessedness. "Thus the vortex of universal warfare, in which the whole creation is involved, contributes to forward the victim of its rage to a higher state of existence."

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\* *Hanes Cymru*, p. 20.

2. *Cylch yr Abred*, or the Circle of Inchoation, which comprehended the material creation, and the condition or state of humanity. In this, all forms of existence constantly tend to further development and progress. The soul of man, passing through all intermediate modes of being in the Circle of Inchoation, attains to humanity, and still continues struggling to ascend upward, aided by the Divine power, until he emerges into the Circle of Felicity.\* But as the state of humanity is one of probation, and man possesses liberty of choice, he may by his own turpitude be doomed to fall back again and re-traverse the whole Circle of Inchoation, the soul becoming after death re-incarnate in that form of corporeity accordant with the propensities it had acquired in its former state of existence; but after every retrogression destined still to ascend, until at length it has attained the consummation and blessedness of its being.†

3. *Cylch y Gwynfyd*, or the Circle of Felicity. Into this the good and virtuous arise immediately after death; while others who, by reason of their moral impurities, are remitted to a lower state, will ultimately, after however long a period, attain to the same station of happiness. There, though their felicity will be perfect, their form of existence will not be stationary, as no finite being can endure without change the tedium of eternity; but they will pass through a series of delightful renovations, ever bearing with them, into every new type of existence, their consciousness and the memory of their former states.

Such is a brief epitome of their doctrines. But that our readers may see them in their primitive form, we subjoin a selection, which we have made and classified from the Theological Triads, and which, unless

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\* It is not a little amusing to find the "theory of development," broached with so much parade of philosophy and scientific learning by the author of "*Vestiges of the History of Creation*," thus really substantially the same as that taught by our Bardic-Druidic ancestors. How far the author may be pleased to find his own hypothesis,—announced with such an air of originality, and elaborated with so much ingenuity and care, as the last and most perfect efflorescence of modern philosophical illumination,—thus anticipated among the dogmas of an ancient and obsolete superstition, we will not undertake to determine.

† That this doctrine of the transmigration of souls held a very prominent place in Druidic theology, is obvious from the fact, that it is the one particular tenet, which seems to have struck all the classical writers as constituting the most marked and characteristic feature of their system. Thus *Cæsar* says, "*In primis hoc volunt persuadere, non interire animas, sed ab aliis post mortem transire ad alios.*" *De Bell. Gall. lib. vi. c. 14.* So also *Lucan*, in addressing the Druids, says,—

"Vobis auctoribus umbræ

Non tacitas Erebi sedes, Ditisque profundi  
Pallida regna petunt: regit idem spiritus artus  
Orbe alio; longæ (canitis si cognita) vitæ  
Mors media est."—*Pharsal. lib. i. 455, &c.*

we are greatly misled by our own partialities, will be admitted to be very remarkable productions, betokening extraordinary depth of meditation and subtlety of thought, for an age and a people so immature and remote.

"There are three circles (or states) of existence: the circle of infinity, where there is nothing but God, of living or dead, and none but God can traverse it; the circle of inchoation, where all things are by nature derived from death,—this circle has been traversed by man; and the circle of felicity, where all things spring from life: this, man shall traverse in heaven."

"There are three primeval unities, and more than one of each cannot exist: one God; one truth; and one point of liberty, and this is where all opposites equiponderate."

"God consists necessarily of three things: the greatest of life, the greatest of knowledge, and the greatest of power; and of what is the greatest, there cannot be more than one of anything."

"Three things none but God can do: to endure the eternities of the circle of infinity; to participate of every state of existence without changing; and to reform and renovate everything without causing the loss of it."

"In three things man unavoidably differs from God: man is finite, God is infinite; man had a beginning, which God could not have; man not being able to endure eternity, must have in the circle of felicity a rotatory change of his mode of existence; God is under no such necessity, being able to endure all things, and that consistent with felicity."

"The three regulations of God towards giving existence to everything: to annihilate the power of evil; to assert all that is good; and to make discrimination manifest, that it might be known what should and what should not be."

"Three causes produced animate beings: Divine love possessed of perfect knowledge; Divine wisdom knowing all possible means; and Divine power possessed by the joint will of Divine love and wisdom."

"Animated beings have three states of existence: that of inchoation in the great deep, (or lowest point of existence;) that of liberty in the state of humanity; and that of love, which is felicity in heaven."

"Three things cannot but exist towards all animated beings from the nature of Divine justice: co-sufferance in the circle of inchoation, because without that none could attain the perfect knowledge of anything; co-participation in the Divine love; and co-ultimity from the nature of God's power and its attributes of justice and mercy."

"There are three necessary incidents of humanity: to suffer, to change, and to choose; and man, having the power to choose, it is impossible before occurrence to foresee what his suffering and changes will be."

"For three things must man unavoidably fall into the circle of inchoation, though he has in everything else attached himself to good: pride, for which he falls down to the utmost of the great deep; falsehood, (untruth,) to a state corresponding with his turpitude; and cruelty, into a corresponding state of brutal malignity, whence, as at first, he returns to the state of humanity."

"The three restorations of the circle of felicity: restoration of original genius and character; restoration of all that was primevally beloved; and the restoration of remembrance from the origin of all things."

"The three excellences of changing mode of existence in the circle of felicity: acquisition of knowledge; beautiful variety; and repose from not being able to endure uniform infinity and uninterrupted eternity."

"Three things dwindle away continually: the dark, the false, and the dead."

"Three things become more and more enfeebled daily, there being a majority of desires in opposition to them: hatred, injustice, and ignorance."

"Three things increase continually: fire or light; understanding or truth; soul or life; these will prevail over everything else, and then the state of inchoation will cease."

The following is a selection from the Moral Triads, which may be regarded as the practical application of their theological teaching.

"The three primary principles of wisdom: obedience to the laws of God; concern for the welfare of mankind; and suffering with fortitude all the accidents of life."

"Three things well understood will give peace: the tendencies of nature, the claims of justice, and the voice of truth."

"There are three things, and God will not love him that loves to look at them: fighting, a monster, and the pomposity of pride."

"Three things produce wisdom: truth, consideration, and suffering."

"The three great ends of knowledge: duty, utility, and decorum."

"There are three men that all ought to look upon with affection: he that with affection looks at the face of the earth; that is delighted with rational works of art; and that looks lovingly on little infants."

"Three men will not love their country: he that loves luxurious food, he that loves riches, and he that loves ease."

"The three laughs of a fool: at the good, at the bad, and at what he knows not what."

"Three things corrupt the world: pride, superfluity, and indolence."\*

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\* Williams' Ecclesiastical Antiquities of the Cymry. E. Williams' Poems. Bardism by Owen, prefixed to "The Heroic Elegies of Llywarch Hu." James' Patriarchal Religion of Britain. Davies' Mythology.

## THE COLLEGE CONFERENCE PAPERS.

## No. V.

*On the Importance of drawing into the Ministry pious and devoted Young Men, from our more educated and wealthy families. By the Rev. R. W. Hamilton, D.D.*

It is suggested, that two opinions or impressions may be found extensively prevailing among the members of Congregational churches and the adherents to Congregational principles, touching the entrance of candidates, selected from affluent and elevated families, into the Congregational ministry. 1. That it is not to be expected, however desirable; that it lies not within any hopeful contingency,—any advised, reasonable probability. 2. That it is not desirable, however it may be expected; that it would not be a good; that it could not subsist with the true working of our organisation, nor with the healthy spirit of our system.

It is suggested, that, before the question be argued, the case,—that which is thus assumed,—what may be called the premiss,—must be properly stated, or every conclusion will fall wide of the truth we seek.

It is suggested, that any form of placing such inquiry before us, What would be the influence of young men of a higher social status, if they entered our pastorate, upon the well-being of religion and its New Testament order?—involves an assumption which needs to be proved, or which ought to be limited.

It is suggested, that many candidates of secular respectability have not been wanting during the two hundred years in which we can more clearly trace the profession and action of our distinguishing views. Those who could command the highest educational means, who could have won the richest prizes and distinctions of this passing world, have cheerfully abided by our type and calling, even when the lot was to be chosen not of disadvantages but of perils. The same proportion may still exist.

It is suggested, that the estimate must be relative. It can only be decided on comparative grounds. What is the style of rank, or the standard of opulence, *among us*? We can conceive, for we are surrounded by the evidence, of far greater things.

It is suggested, that a light reflected from other communities and administrations may serve to guide us in this adjustment. We might ask, What is the ratio of poorer or richer, of more privileged or more humble, aspirants to the sacred office in the Established Church of this country?—bearing always in recollection, the undisputed fact of the

numbers, the wealth, and the aristocracy, of that church when set against our lowly side.

It is suggested, that with these precautions and qualifications, the moot-point may now be discussed.

It is suggested, that the course of the objections ought to be the course of the argument. This will be pertinent, equitable, and courageously antagonistic.

*Is the accession of the more early instructed, the more bountifully provided, youth of our churches to the Christian ministry among us to be expected?*

It is suggested, that though there be sacrifices which these young men must endure, all of these are not placed beyond certain curative influences; some may be only incidental, and it is probable that they shall shortly cease. Others are essential, but then they are founded on principles which we deem wholly excellent.

They who live at ease, though our more favoured members are generally producers still, are disposed to settle their sons in the avocations which are more lettered and more esteemed, to which preferment is attached, and by which honour can be accumulated,—which are commonly known as professions.

It is suggested, that the Congregational ministry, though most properly alienated from trade, though an appointment held apart from the businesses of life, is in no sense a profession. To be true to our great tenets, we should neither seek nor accept any professional benefit from our ministry. If the courtesy of society offer us respect and concede us deference, we should not lay it to the account of a spiritual function. Should it be felt that our character deserves it, or our influence challenges it,—we may be content. No exemption from civil duty, no remission of civil impost, should we crave or boast, just because the equalities of social men or citizens are so far disturbed, every such exemption leaving to others more to do, namely, our part,—and every such remission leaving to others more to pay, namely, our share.

It is suggested, that the ministers of our creed and discipline do not of themselves constitute an order. They are not a corporation, nor can they be incorporated. Though they are “workers together,” and may well cherish the bonds of a special fraternisation, they want not, nor could they admit any act of society, or of the state, which would so recognise them. They only claim the rights which are due to all other citizens. Any special consideration, or enrolment in any special caste or fellowship, they regard not only as an injustice to others, but a false position for themselves.

It is suggested, that these two facts,—the obliteration of the professional character, and the absence of a corporate order, from our ministry,—will be found to present the chief points of dislike that may

be taken to it, by young men of superior standing and property. They know that by conforming to the Established Church, and by entering its ministry, they will find themselves in a profession which gives precedence and estimation, which invests them with a title that opens every access to station and influence, which may carry them beyond the ducal coronet in their career of promotion. They know that henceforth they are attached to an association far more powerful, compact, and endowed, than the ordinary classifications of social man: that it has its own spirit and self-bias: that it rests upon its own self-circling interests and rights. Here would be found the principal sacrifices, the immense foregoing forfeiture of worldly respectability.

It is suggested, that the indisposition to join our ministry would not so commonly be of a grosser covetousness. Some who embrace the conditions of the hierarchy are splendidly beneficed; yet there are many who have sought no gain. The advowson yields them an incompetent return for its purchase. There are nobles who hold but patrimonial livings. Curacies of the meanest income are in request. If the postulant for the ministry coveted silver, and gold, and apparel, he might occasionally secure a larger share in withdrawing from the parliamentary church than in adhering to it; but to a youthful mind, elate and ambitious, it must bring no light self-denial, to be cut off from liberal profession and corporate rank.

It is suggested, that these tests may most fitly prove the spiritual men we want. If they cannot withstand these temptations, if these be abandonments to which they cannot consent, they are not adapted to us. We need not judge them. If their conscience approve of a professional and corporate ministry, they will not surely come to us, among whom they can never find it; if their conscience disapprove, and yet they court it, we may rejoice to have escaped so inconsistent an alliance. We shall never hail them who do not look for sacrifices among us, and who are not prepared to make them.

It is suggested, that though there is much to deter such a class of persons, yet that, *being spiritual*, they will own to many inducements.

The joy of escape from all mental reservation will be theirs. To prevaricate with words which we have sworn to understand and teach in their proper and obvious meaning, in the meaning with which all who hear them accept them,—to construct a theory, which is felt and allowed to be unpractical, for their explanation and warrant,—to take one or other of two opposite exponents, and to bend it as the wish may be,—is a heavy yoke. It has been wreathed upon the neck of many. Our opinions are not loose. Denominationally they are fixed. But we know not the "*jurare in verba*." Every man utters his convictions in his own words. This is a privilege which we can scarcely appreciate: he who, day by day, must justify to himself the use of language and the course of conduct which approach the double-minded



and the collusive, can alone, by the contrast, truly estimate what must be the gladness of a clear spirit and a single heart.

It will be scarcely an inferior satisfaction to minister to a people who will sustain all evangelic statement and holy faithfulness. *We* may often suspect our legitimate motive. Are we precise in our exposition of doctrine, earnest in our rebuke of sin? Are we searching in our appeal? This is what our people desire. We may give into it as pleasing man. It may be a snare and art of popularity. But there are they who have been surrounded with different temptations. Worldly neighbours, ecclesiastical governors, have wondered, sneered, and interdicted. What a new atmosphere of liberty would it have been to have stood in our pulpit, to have received the response which our fullest enlargements of truth and zeal commonly awaken!

Though our ministry be supposed to lie under many restrictions from the popular elements of our system, we would assure them who, from their gentle condition, might most dislike the scriptural rule, "Consider one another,"—who might most shrink from the possible collision of such a pure democracy,—that the actual liberty which they can otherwise verify, will be greatly shorn in comparison with this. The nobleman's pew, the rector's brow, the prelate's Dionysian ear, are discouragements to liberty with which no coarse remark, no blunt behaviour, of our poorest of "the Lord's freemen," could be brought into rivalry. Malapert conceit may be easily set down.

To doubt that young men will desire our ministry, young men of consideration and family, seems a discrediting of our principles, and to breathe a despair of their victory. We believe them to be the rules and safeguards of the Messiah's kingdom. We contend that they must never be altered to suit any state of civil society. We cheerfully and solemnly confide in them and their ultimate universality. We are assured that the theory of raising religion by its artificial dignities, placing the mitred heads of its ministers in courts and parliaments for the purpose of recommending it, is wholly baseless and wrong. When the rich among the people shall entreat the favour of Him who is Head over all to his church, they will not be wanting in perfect loyalty to him and in ready acceptance of his service.

We think, also, that the amount of mind and of religious information to be found among our churches, will prove to them who have a larger command of general advantages, literary as well as common, a very powerful lure. None but the pious episcopalian clergyman can understand the distance between himself and a parochial congregation. There are few common grounds, there is scarcely sympathy. Could he come at once into one of our communities!—could he hear our people converse with the Bible in their hand!—could he hear them pray!—what pleasure would he find in dwelling among a congregation

which could spiritually discern him, value him, understand him, sustain him!

The very character of our stipend, though viewed by them of whom we speak with special grudge, will be seen as falling under the express letter of New Testament law. In the comfort of its working, it will surely be found equal to any satisfaction that can be felt in compulsory assessments. It is now felt by those who look truly at the matter, that no support can be so honourable, can be so pleasantly agreeable, to a delicate mind, as the free-will levy of esteem and confidence. "The Lord hath ordained it:" it is therefore as fit as it is binding.

If we might venture to name another ground of expectation, (though as it rests upon what we have yet to prove,—the desirableness of this event,—it has in the present argument no logical place,) it would be this; that the growing state of our denomination requires this addition. He who "called the righteous man from the east," He whose quiver is full of arrows, will not withhold from us "the polished" at our need. Proper instruments always have been prepared, and at the right conjunctures always may be expected. He who giveth pastors after his heart, to feed his people with knowledge and understanding, will bestow their qualifications and prepare their way.

The harsh measures of ecclesiastical tyranny now prevailing in the Established Church, the teasing interferences with conscience, the magnifying of little things, until, as impositions, they have become the more grievous for being little, may lead some, whose bias might be other, to seek quiet and refuge, unhampered labour and unharassed peace, in our secession. It may be a Pella, whither many may fly from a Jerusalem in bondage with her children. Patience has long been tried, indignation long stifled, self-conquest has ceased to be virtuous, as self-vindication would cease to be schismatic.

No little favour may be shown to us, as our principles are understood, and are partially adopted by other bodies,—no small preference may be indicated,—the very tide may be with us, when it shall be known that these principles are not new, struck out in the heats of controversy and revolution, but those which we have retained for ages, unequivocally and unblenchingly, to which has been added the witnessing consistency of the confessor's exile, and the martyr's crown. It may be soon thought that there is no opprobrium in taking part with us.

Every advance of public opinion must be favourable to our principles. They have no stay nor stand in fading tyrannies and superstitions. They hold necessary alliance with the progressions of society in information and liberty. Other systems may be left behind; ours cannot be carried forward to a blaze of knowledge too bright, or to a pitch of liberty too popular!

*It is now suggested, that what may be reasonably expected, should be as heartily desired:* an increase from the more wealthy households to our ministry we believe would be a good.

It is suggested, that in this argument, the whole question is one of expediency. We have to deal with those whom we can find. But we must seek the best qualified. We must pray the Lord of the harvest for such reapers. All whom He sends, only those whom he sends, into the field must we acknowledge. They who are apt to teach, men given to reading, men capable of thought, men girded for action, are required, and we intercede that they may receive this designation.

It is suggested, that poverty implies no necessary disqualification. The highest posts in science and art are frequently occupied by men who have risen to them by the force of their own genius. Many of our best preachers and ripest scholars have enjoyed no adventitious privileges. They have wrought their rugged path, and have achieved their fame.

It is suggested, that these premises involve no disparagement of poverty. No preference is given to wealth over it as a condition. No wish is supposed to exclude any just pretensions from the humblest quarter. But if both parties be equally eligible, then may a choice be made between them? May there be, *cæteris paribus*, a singling out of either? Would there be advantage in accepting the richer?

It is suggested, that the excess of well-furnished candidates has never been known among us, so that a circumstantial discrimination should be needed.

It is suggested, that the utmost wish to be entertained in this matter, is a learned and holy ministry representing each constituent class of our churches; the rich *as well as* the poor.

It is suggested, that it will be better while we encourage the rich, being duly qualified, to show what would be the advantages of so obtaining their services, without any reflection upon, without any reference to, any other class. All are welcome on their own several grounds.

It is suggested, that there is nothing scornful in meeting and resisting the claims of poverty when they are pressed as paramount. Yet it has been averred that ministers of this origin are to be desired most. This we must deny. The arrogance is now in such an averment. The spirit is expressed, which, on either side, is wrong; but it is now expressed on the side where it is unnatural and unredeemed.

It is suggested, therefore, that if any boast of the apostolic ministry as poor and illiterate,—as a “calling,” by the foolish things and the weak things of the earth,—that was done in an age of miraculous endowments, and was designed to prove, to the sense of the world, that what had received no help of man, and was only opposed by him, must be Divine. But prophecies have failed, and tongues have ceased.

Did it please God to give us the education of Pentecost, little should we seek what we were, or what we were not, what we knew, or what we knew not, before!

Let us not hide from ourselves the advantages which would arise from the adhesion of such a description of students.

It is suggested, that it is an unworthy consideration to dwell upon their ability to bear their own charges. The mixed system, in which some support themselves and others are on the foundation, is certainly not the best. We do not think it desirable that any should be so ranked as to be, if not beneficiaries, certainly not debtors. The best rule may be,—we think that it is,—that all should contribute somewhat of their cost, and that all should contribute alike. In the one case, the contingent would be personal, still involving grateful dependence upon family,—in the other, it would be raised by the church, involving a grateful dependence no less honourable.

It is suggested, that such young men, having enjoyed early culture, would be exempted from that which is characteristic of a deferred education. This tardy beginning almost invariably confesses itself. It is the *Οψυμαθία* of which the ancient critics spoke. Like the dark vein of the finest sculpture, it constantly re-appears, and gives a sinister expression to the whole. It is all but impossible to conceal the early neglect. Instead of the "*callida junctura*," there is the awkward seam and edge. Scholars from the hornbook, from the youth up, *ab ovo*, though they may be less meritorious than those who have broken away from long trade and ignorance, still are better scholars.

It is suggested, that the knowledge of good manners,—the subdued asperities, the refined elegances, of life, cannot be quite indifferent. Courtesy, being a Christian duty, must be within the reach of every Christian; it must consist in a sentiment of the mind. An outward polish cannot supply its place. But there is a propriety, an ease, which are very pleasing: and from an early acquaintance with good society and its habits, only can they originate.

It is suggested, that the motive in this predicament, will be more convincing by being more necessarily and obviously sincere. With the utmost kindness, it may be affirmed what the honourable parties would be the last to suppress,—that some of our ministers, by that ministry, have risen greatly in the social scale. They have nobly proved that they were uncorrupted, incorruptible! The same talents would have raised them higher, it is true, had they entered another vocation: but it was the ministry which unlocked those talents. Nor is it ungracious to remark, that the ministry, as the key of those talents, was more accessible by poverty than would have been medicine or law. Cruelly, truculently, unjust would be the crimination of motive in the neophyte, who, until he sate at our college-board, had not sufficiency of bread. The argument, however, is not weakened in favour of the

more obvious uprightness of those who in secular comforts sink, and in civil pretensions sacrifice all. The demonstration of high motive is ever a check upon the selfishness of our nature, shaming and rebuking it,—and the example is a blessing to our world.

It is suggested that, in any comparative view of the humility of the two classes thus supposed, the palm of that grace may, even generally, be granted to the young men of early discipline and worldly fortune. If we appeal to academic recollections, they who were dissatisfied with diet, and with the obligations necessarily and most properly menial, were not of this class. If we appeal to the settlements of the young men around us, the vain and the restless are not of this class. How have the members of influential families, when trained to our ministry, been the most cheerful amidst every collegiate rigour—been the most ready to accept the retired sphere of labour—been the most diffident and condescending among the poor of the flock,—while circumstance and tact have lent to their whole bearing a native attraction and an unaffected grace!

It is suggested, that such candidates will prove eventually far more studious than most of their less favoured compeers. At first they will evince something of the schoolboy; while the rest, entering on their engagements with almost a desponding sense of their difficulty, will most earnestly plod and persevere. The educated youth may lie idle for the little, because of his facility. But a new curriculum awaits him. He must loiter no longer. Others work, and heavily must work, if they would succeed. Disgust soon comes. Weariness succeeds. Their studious habits are dissolved. Not so with them whom this argument respects. They could scarcely remit their pursuits. The second training has secured the first, as the first facilitated the second: an intellectual prowess henceforth loves to mate the recondite and profound.

It is suggested, that such a species of men might be incidentally beneficial to our denominational interests. Though this be not our strongest passion, we are not careless of them. We court not the affluent; we court not the devotion of the sons of the affluent to our ministry: but we know no contempt of wealth. We have hitherto, in this argument, chiefly valued it as the pledge of education; we have even made them synonymous. This is not certainly the universal truth; but wealth is of service—it is indispensable to our best schemes. It does not contribute proportionately, but we ought not to drive it from us. When the children of those families favour another ministry, the consequence may be foreseen. Parental leanings cannot be crucified; brethren and sisters must surround him whom they have always loved; he draws all after him. There is not much constraint. Fashion helps the secession; but there is loss. It would be hypocrisy

to deny it. It is not just to speak of any loss as trivial, if we have not thought so until what is lost can be no more retained.

It is suggested, that the times which are going over us, and their immediate future, must require a form of mental power and impression which no mere rude force can supersede. Strength is wanted, but it needs to be refined. There must be taste without prudery, and elegance without attenuation. The thoroughly-educated alone can hope, with rare exceptions, to accomplish this. With the greatest might no coarseness need be mixed. The superficial observer might think that the Hercules with his club, tearing the Nemean lion, is the very figure of strength, because of each straining muscle, and each starting vein; but this is only human effort; or it may be gigantic, which is only the human in the colossal. But he who sees beyond the first survey, and combines nobler ideas, will mark the superior power of the Apollo, with his unerring bow and his serenest presence. No labour, no disturbance; the attitude, the look, the supposed action, breathing the ease and repose of divinity. The lion, long resisting, is at last overborne and crushed to death: at the first touch of the celestial shaft, the Python expires!

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#### MEMORABLE DAYS IN OCTOBER.

- Oct. 1, 1554. Queen Mary crowned at Westminster.
- „ 1, 1828. The “London University,” now “University College,” opened.
- „ 2, 1187. Jerusalem taken by Saladin.
- „ 2, 1792. The Baptist Mission to the East Indies formed.
- „ 4, 1566. Peter Paul Vergerio, reformer, died.
- „ 5, 1600. Dr. Thomas Goodwin born.
- „ 5, 1703. Jonathan Edwards, President of New Jersey College, born.
- „ 6, 1747. David Brainerd, missionary to the Indians, died.
- „ 6, 1783. Peace proclaimed with the United States.
- „ 11, 1531. Zwingle slain at Cappel.
- „ 11, 1737. An earthquake, attended by a hurricane, near the mouth of the Ganges, which raised the waters of the river forty feet above their level, and destroyed above 300,000 lives.
- „ 12, 1492. Columbus landed at St. Salvador, the first land discovered in the new world.
- „ 12, 1658. The declaration of the faith and order of the Congregational Churches in England, agreed to at a meeting of their elders and messengers at the Savoy.
- „ 13, 1602. Francis Junius died.
- „ 13, 1605. Theodore Beza, professor of divinity at Geneva, died.
- „ 16, 1555. Latimer and Ridley burnt at Oxford.
- „ 16, 1699. Matthew Mead died.
- „ 16, 1812. Henry Martyn, translator of the New Testament into Persian, died.
- „ 17, 1553. George, Prince of Anhalt, reformer, and evangelical bishop of Merseburg, died.

- Oct. 18, 1502. The University of Wittenberg founded by the Elector Frederick.  
 „ 18, 1662. Matthew Henry born.  
 „ 20, 1687. Lima destroyed by an earthquake.  
 „ 20, 1751. Dr. Doddridge died at Lisbon.  
 „ 23, 1526. Tonstall's order to suppress Tyndale's New Testament.  
 „ 23, 1641. Irish rebellion and massacre of the Protestants.  
 „ 24, 1685. Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.  
 „ 26, 1555. Olympia Fulvia Morata died.  
 „ 26, 1623. Fatal Vespers at Blackfriars.  
 „ 27, 1633. John Janeway born.  
 „ 27, 1661. Philip Henry preached his farewell sermon at Worthenbury.  
 „ 28, 900. Alfred the Great died.  
 „ 28, 1746. Lima a second time destroyed by earthquake.  
 „ 31, 1665. The Oxford Act passed.

WE have, as usual, mentioned various occurrences in the preceding list, without intending to detail the particulars of them. To this class belong the events connected with civil history, such as the death of Alfred, the taking of Jerusalem by Saladin, the accession of Queen Mary, the Irish rebellion and massacre, and the proclamation of peace with the United States in 1783, which ratified their recognition by the British Government as an independent nation. Some of these events, it is true, fall almost equally within the province of the ecclesiastical historian; but their moral, like that of the rest, lies upon the surface. If there be an exception, we are disposed to regard the taking of Jerusalem in that light; not, indeed, considered as an independent event, but as a principal one in the history of crusades. Whatever folly or fanaticism characterised those extraordinary movements, their effect on society is quite another thing, and that is a question of no mean interest. The whole fabric of European society was greatly modified by the Crusades, the influence of which on the arts and civilisation is not easily calculated. We therefore cordially recommend those who have not access to the larger and very learned German work of Wilken (*Geschichte der Kreuzzüge*,) to peruse the history of them by Mill, or the briefer narrative of Mr. Keightley. The last-mentioned work, (in two volumes, twelves,) is written expressly for the young, and is included in the publications of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

October has her appropriate page in the history of religious persecution. Of Latimer's and Ridley's martyrdom we shall speak presently. The most extensive calamity which it records is the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in 1685, a measure of almost unparalleled enormity. By the edict, which was signed by Henry IV., April 30, 1598, the Protestants had been allowed full liberty of conscience, except that the public exercise of their religion was limited to particular parts of the kingdom, and that they were compelled to pay tithes to the Romish clergy, and observe the principal festivals.



"They were declared eligible to all offices; their poor were to be received into the hospitals; and for their protection mixed chambers were to be established in all the parliaments."—*Browning's History of the Huguenots*, ch. 1. The revocation of the edict was preceded by the famous *Dragonnades*, the cruelties of which can be but faintly conceived. An account of some of them has appeared in the narrative of the sufferings of a French Protestant family, by Jean Migault, published in London, 1824, and reprinted in Paris, in the original French, in 1825. Through these cruelties, whole families, and even villages, abjured. At the same time, large sums were distributed to those who voluntarily changed their profession. Already, in 1682, thirty-four thousand conversions were said to have taken place, and within three years afterwards twelve thousand more were reported, resulting from similar measures, which a Catholic writer, in his *Histoire du Calvinisme*, has called "replete with mildness." At length, all previous hardships—the forced separation of Protestant children from their parents, the legal prohibition of Protestant trade and labour, the imprisonment, torture, and execution of Protestant ministers, the demolition of Protestant temples, &c.—were followed by the express revocation of the charter (a powerless one indeed!) by which their religious liberties had been secured. In the edict of revocation, which declares that *as the greater part of the Protestants had embraced the Catholic religion, the edict of Nantes was useless*, the said edict, with every royal declaration in favour of the Protestants, is annulled; their Protestant worship is prohibited under severe penalties; ministers, refusing to be converted, are to quit the kingdom within fifteen days, and to abstain from preaching and exhortation under pain of condemnation to the galleys; and schools for the instruction of Protestant children are forbidden. Fugitives are, at the same time, invited to return, and emigration interdicted, under penalty of the galleys and confiscation of property. In the last clause, which was intended only to prevent emigration, and gave great offence to the violent party, it was declared that Protestants "might continue their trade and enjoy their property without being troubled under pretext of their religion, on condition only of abstaining from worship."

It is not necessary here to give lengthened particulars concerning the cruelties which preceded or followed the edict of revocation. As Guerike observes, "It was the signal for the most terrific persecution. Sixteen hundred churches were destroyed, thousands of Protestants executed, . . . hundreds of thousands, after enduring the greatest perils in eluding the spies on the frontiers, became self-exiled. All needful information will be found respecting this period of French Protestant history in *Browning's History of the Huguenots*, chapters lx. and lxi.

The purchase made by Bishop Tonstall, through Packington, of  
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Tyndale's New Testament, and the unexpected consequences in the appearance of a new, amended version, are well known. The terms of the order issued by Tonstall, some years before, for the suppression of it are, however, less known, though not undeserving to be kept in memory. They serve to show that the enemies of Bible circulation have, from the beginning, used the same flimsy arguments, and that if they were indeed the friends of Scripture which they pretend to be, the Bible, above all other victims, would have reason to complain of its friends. The preamble of Tonstall's order is as follows :—

"We having understanding that many children of iniquity, maintainers of Luther's sect, blinded through extreme wickedness, wandering from the way of truth and the Catholic faith, craftily have translated the New Testament into our English tongue, intermeddling therewith many heretical articles and erroneous opinions, pernicious and offensive, seducing the simple people, *attempting by their wicked and perverse interpretations to profane the majesty of Scripture, which hitherto hath remained undefiled*, and craftily to abuse the most holy word of God, and the true sense of the same: of the which translation there are many books imprinted, some with glosses and some without, containing in the English tongue that pestiferous and most pernicious poison dispersed throughout all our diocese of London in great numbers: which truly, without it be speedily foreseen, will contaminate and infect the flock committed unto us with most deadly poison and heresy, to the grievous peril and danger of the souls committed to our charge, and the offence of God's Divine Majesty. Therefore we," &c.

Then follows the order to the archdeacons of the diocese, to bring in and deliver to the vicar-general all copies of the translation they could lay hold of. In respect to Tonstall's subsequent purchase of the whole impression, it was speedily understood by himself, as well as others, how entirely he had been outwitted. But Burnet has observed that in the whole affair judicious persons discerned the moderation of Tonstall. The mild and good-natured prelate was certainly, unlike many of his brethren, much less willing to burn men than books, and in the affair of the Testament, it is not improbable that he was well contented to approve his zeal in the old cause at so cheap and harmless a rate.

The university of Wittenberg, founded by Frederick the Wise, in 1502, and endowed by him, at the request of Spalatinus, with a public library, in 1514, no longer exists. After the long continental war which closed in 1814, that part of Saxony of which Wittenberg is the principal town, was transferred by the allied sovereigns to the King of Prussia; and as that monarch had already two universities,—Berlin and Halle,—distant only one hundred English miles from each other, and Wittenberg lay on the road between them, he suppressed that at Wittenberg, and erected in its stead a theological seminary, which he placed in the old Augustinian convent, where Luther had resided. Though Wittenberg had, long before this, lost the renown which it

enjoyed in its early days, as the principal school of the evangelical theology, it is impossible to overlook the remarkable providence by which Frederick, not knowing what he did, was led to prepare a cradle for the Reformation years before it appeared. Here it was that Luther, who, six years after the foundation of the university, was appointed professor of philosophy in it, acquired that thorough knowledge of the Aristotelian system, which assisted him at a subsequent period in overthrowing many of the subtle errors of the schoolmen, and here that he spent that life of active resistance to the authority and doctrine of Rome, which commenced with the publication of his famous theses on the door of the castle-church, and reached its climax in the burning of the pope's bull without the city walls. When the university was removed, a colossal statue of Luther under a Gothic canopy was erected in the market-place by the king, to commemorate the days of Luther's activity in Wittenberg: and hitherto, the seminary which was established in its stead in the Augustinian convent, being placed by the king under the superintendence of teachers distinguished both for their superior learning and for their evangelical sentiment, has worked far more in the spirit of Luther and his times, than the university had done probably since the death of Melancthon.

The Savoy Confession which, according to our list, was made on the 12th of October, was agreed to at a meeting of elders and messengers from above one hundred Congregational churches. The majority of the messengers were brethren not devoted to the ministry; the rest were pastors of churches, and, as Neal says, "some younger divines about the court, as the reverend and learned Mr. John Howe, at that time chaplain to the young Protector, and others." The synod was opened with a day of fasting and prayer. The declaration was drawn up and arranged by six brethren, whose names (with those of the secretary or scribe, as he was then called, George Griffith,) were attached to the preface published with it. These brethren were John Owen, Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, William Bridge, Joseph Caryl, and William Greenhill. The heads of doctrine, agreed to by the committee, were presented to the synod every morning, being read by the scribe, after which they were discussed. Great unanimity prevailed, though there were occasional speeches and debates upon particular words and phrases; and after a conference of eleven or twelve days, the declaration, as afterwards published, was agreed upon. Not having the original 4to. edition at hand, we must describe it as it appears in the 12mo. reprint of 1729, in which the declaration itself occupies ninety-six well-filled pages, and is introduced by a preface of thirty-six more. We need not say that it is needlessly prolix, and comprises not a few doubtful points. It also bears the character of the age in which it was produced, in two other respects,—its rigid systematic character, and the prominence given to the secret will of God over his revealed will.

It is still a monument of the evangelical faith, holy profession, and profound, diligent study of the men who penned and consented to it, though less useful, and less in accordance with the spirit and habit of our times than it would have been, had it possessed a less scholastic and a more biblical form and structure. We have noticed it here, however, not so much for the purpose of characterising and commending the declaration itself, as the spirit in which it was drawn up. The preface abounds with noble sentiments and declarations worthy to be held and reiterated by Congregationalists in every age. The following are from the commencement of it:—

“Confession of the faith that is in us, when justly called for, is so indispensable a due all owe to the glory of the sovereign God, that it is ranked among the duties of the first commandment, such as prayer is; and therefore is by Paul yoked with faith itself, as necessary to salvation: ‘With the heart man believeth to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.’—Rom. x. 10.

“When confessions are made by a company of professors of Christianity, jointly meeting to that end, the most genuine and natural use of such confessions is, that, under the same form of words, they express the substance of the same common salvation, or unity of their faith; whereby ‘speaking the same things, they show themselves perfectly joined in the same mind, and in the same judgment.’—1 Cor. i. 10.

“And accordingly such a transaction is to be looked upon only as a meet or fit medium, or means, whereby to express that their common faith and salvation, and *no way to be made use of as an imposition upon any*. Whatever is of force or constraint in matters of this nature, causes them to degenerate from the name and nature of confessions; and turns them from being confessions of faith, into exactions and impositions of faith.

“And such common confession of the orthodox faith, made in simplicity of heart by any such body of Christians, with concord among themselves, ought to be entertained by all others that love the truth as it is in Jesus, with an answerable rejoicing. For if the unanimous opinions and assertions in some few points of religion, and that when only two churches, namely that of Jerusalem, and the messengers of Antioch, met, assisted by some of the Apostles, were by the believers of those times received with so much joy, that it is said, ‘they rejoiced for the consolation,’ much more this is to be done, when the whole substance of faith, and form of wholesome words, shall be declared by the messengers of a multitude of churches, though wanting those advantages of counsel and authority of the apostles, which that assembly had.

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“Further, as the soundness and wholeness of the matter give the vigour and life to such confessions, so the inward freeness, willingness, and readiness of the spirits of the confessors, contribute beauty and loveliness thereto. As in prayer to God, so in confession made to men, if two or three met, do agree, it renders both to either the more acceptable. The Spirit of Christ is in himself too free, great and generous a spirit, to suffer himself to be used by any human arm, to whip men into belief. He drives not, but gently leads into all truth, and persuades men to dwell in the tents of like precious faith, which would lose of its preciousness and value, if that sparkle of freeness shone not in it. The character of his people is to be ‘a willing people in the day of His power’ (not man’s,) ‘in the beauties of holiness,’ which are the assemblings of the saints.”—Preface, pp. i.—v. ed. 1729.

The same spirit pervades the document throughout. A few pages onward there occurs a noble defence of the liberty of individuals in non-essentials; which they thus assert to be the "constant principle" of the Congregational churches, and vindicate from the then frequent charge of licentiousness.

"This to have been our constant principle, we are not ashamed to confess to the whole Christian world. Wherein yet we desire we may be understood, not as if, in the abstract, we stood indifferent to falsehood or truth, or were careless whether faith or error, in any truths but fundamental, were to obtain or not, so we had our liberty in our petty and smaller differences, or as if, to make sure of that, we had cut out this wide cloak for it. No: we profess that the whole and every particle of that faith delivered to the saints, (the substance of which we have, according to our light, here professed,) is, as to the propagation and furtherance of it by all Gospel means, as precious to us as our lives, or what can be supposed dear to us; and in our sphere we have endeavoured to promote them accordingly. But yet withal, we have contended, and still contend, (*and if we had all the power which any or all of our brethren of differing opinions have desired to have over us, or others, we should grant it to them all,*) we have contended, and still contend for this: that in the concrete, the persons of all such gracious saints, they and their errors as they are in them, when they are but such errors as do and may stand with communion in Christ, though they should not repent of them, as not being convinced of them, to the end of their days—that those with these errors (that are purely spiritual, and intrench and overthrow not civil societies,) as concrete with their persons, should *for Christ's sake*, be borne with by all Christians in the world; and they be permitted to enjoy all ordinances and spiritual privileges, according to their light, as freely as any other of their brethren that pretend to the greatest orthodoxies: as having an equal and as fair a right in and to Christ, and all the holy things of Christ, as any other can challenge to themselves."

This is a noble testimony for the time when it was written, though it does not reach the point to which even our parliamentary statutes have since attained. The great value of it lies, however, not in what it recognises with respect to legal toleration, but in the principle of particular church communion which it develops. Proofs of the liberty enjoyed by individuals in the communion of the Congregational churches have been already laid before our readers, in Robinson's letter, and other documents, which we have quoted in the course of these papers.\*

We must leave this preface when we have made one more extract, which is of admirable application to our own times, when so many of

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\* We venture to append another of those simple documents whereby the Independent churches of that period strove to guard the Christian liberties of their members. It is the covenant of the church at Wottesfield, in Suffolk, settled in 1678. "We do covenant or agree in the presence of God, through the assistance of his Holy Spirit, to walk together in all the ordinances of the Lord Jesus, as far as the same are made clear to us, endeavouring the advancement of the glory of our Father, the subjection of our will to the will of our Redeemer, and the mutual edification of each other in his most holy faith and fear."

our brethren, ill instructed in the true principles of Independent Congregationalism, seem to be jealous even of the most scriptural and catholic efforts to unite union with liberty. Speaking of the remarkable consent and harmony of doctrine which prevailed at their meeting, they say :—

“This accord of ours hath fallen out without having held any correspondence together, or prepared consultation by which we might come to be advised of one another’s minds. We allege not this as a matter of commendation in us; no, we acknowledge it to have been a great neglect. And accordingly one of the first proposals for union amongst us was, that there might be a constant correspondence held among the churches for counsel and mutual edification, for time to come, to prevent the like omission.

“We confess, that from the first, every, or at least the generality of our churches, have been in a manner like so many ships (though holding forth the same general colours) launched singly, and sailing apart and alone in the vast ocean of these tumultuous times, and they exposed to every wind of doctrine, under no other conduct than the word and Spirit, and their particular elders and principal brethren, without associations among themselves, or so much as holding out common lights to others, whereby to know where they were.

“But yet whilst we thus confess to our own shame this neglect, let all acknowledge, that God has ordered it for his high and greater glory; in that his singular care and power should have so watched over each of these, as that all should be found to have steered their course by the same chart, and have been bound for one and the same port, and that upon this general search now made, the same holy and blessed truths, of all sorts, which are current and warrantable amongst all the other churches of Christ in the world, should be found to be our lading.”

O that this confession of Owen, Goodwin, and others,—entitled, with them, to be regarded as among the greatest lights of the age,—might be duly weighed by the present generation of Independents! We may be wiser than our fathers in some things; but we are sorry dunces in comparison with them on the duty and advantage of fraternal union and co-operation among churches.

The formation of the Baptist Missionary Society is not only entitled to grateful commemoration, as the measure which prepared the way for those numerous translations of the Scriptures into the languages of the East, which constitute the glory of the Mission, but is deeply interesting as it recalls the memory of the excellent men who founded it. The learned and zealous Carey, the sagacious, indefatigable Fuller, the amiable and holy Pearce, with Ryland, Sutcliffe, and others, their worthy fellow-labourers, were the founders of this Society. Their efforts preceded by three years those by which the London Missionary Society was established. We must refer our readers to the *Life of Fuller*, by Ryland and Morris, and to *Fuller’s Life of Pearce*, as enlarged by Mr. W. H. Pearce, for fuller information respecting the efforts of Carey in particular to fan the missionary spirit among his brethren. The burden of his discourse before the Baptist Association at Nottingham on May 30, 1732—Expect great things,—attempt great

things,—has become proverbial. The Society, like many other great designs, grew from very small beginnings. It "was actually formed," says Dr. Ryland, (*Life of Fuller*, p. 150,) "in Mrs. Beeby Wallis's back parlour, at Kettering, on October 2, 1792. As all the friends of the Baptist mission know, we began with a subscription of £13. 2s. 6d. but at a second meeting at Northampton, October 31, brother Pearce brought the surprising sum of £70 from his friends at Birmingham, which put new spirits into us all. Still we knew not how to proceed, whom to send, nor where to begin our operations." This was truly "the day of small things," but it was not to be despised. The "little one has become a thousand," and millions of idolaters have been supplied, through this feeble instrumentality, with the leaves which are for the healing of the nations. May their help still be in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth!

Our list records the birthdays of three men, for whose existence the world is the better:—John Janeway, Matthew Henry, and Jonathan Edwards. The last two benefited their fellow-men both by their lives and by their writings; leaving behind them works which posterity "will not willingly let die." Janeway had little or no opportunity to serve God with his pen: but while he lived, he lived to the Lord, and when he died, he died to the Lord, and both living and dying he was the Lord's. Like Elijah, he ascended to heaven in a chariot of fire. Of his Memoir published by his brother, Robert Hall says: "it exhibits a life eminently formed on the example of Christ, and a death-bed scene of extraordinary elevation and triumph. It is next to impossible to contemplate either, . . . without feeling an increasing conviction of the reality and dignity of true religion." He had distinguished himself very remarkably in early youth as a scholar and mathematician, so that while at Eton he was accounted the glory of the school, and when at seventeen years of age he went to Cambridge, the electors of King's College contended for the patronage of him. But all his interest in human studies gave way to higher thoughts, when, as he perused Baxter's *Saints' Everlasting Rest*, the grace of the Saviour reached his heart, and when, to use his brother's quaint language, God "did convince him, what a poor thing it was to know so much of the heavens and never come there."

"He now thought Mr. Bolton had some reason on his side when he said, 'Give me the most magnificent, glorious worldling, that ever trod upon earthly mould, richly crowned with all the ornaments and excellences of nature, art, policy, and preferment, or what art can wish besides: yet without the life of grace to animate and ennoble them, be even to the eye of heavenly wisdom but as a rotten carcass stuck over with flowers, magnified dung, gilded rottenness, golden damnation;' he began now to be of Anaxagoras's mind, that his work on earth was to study heaven and to get thither; and that except a man might be admitted to greater preferment than this world can bestow upon her favourites, it were scarce worth the while to be born."—*Life*, by James Janeway, ch. 1.



His rare spirit was very early exhaled and gathered up to heaven. Baxter's reflections on this providence are full of pathos. "I confess," says he, in the address which he prefixed to the memoir, "such instances are very sad to my thoughts, while I am desiring the welfare of mankind on earth." But Baxter, amidst all his sadness, beautifully justifies the ways of God.

"We think it great pity," says he, "that he lived to preach but two sermons in the world: that some poor, ignorant, dull congregation, had not been instructed and awakened by his doctrine: and his spiritual fervour had not, by dispersed writings, inflamed the souls of thousands with the same heavenly love and zeal. But who knoweth yet but that *this our narrative of his holy exemplary life and death, may do as much as more numerous or voluminous writings?* The many volumes of holy lives of ancient doctors, martyrs and later divines, philosophers, and others, in Germany, England and other lands, have done much good, and are still very useful, pleasant and profitable recreation—oh! how much better than play-books and romances!—but experience tells us that God still poureth forth as large measures of his Spirit as heretofore he did."

We forbear enlargement on the excellences of Janeway's character, his wise and happy, because lovely, humble, and prayerful efforts to do good, or his "abundant entrance" into God's everlasting kingdom. Our wish is to induce our readers to peruse his brother's narrative. This has often been reprinted under the title: *Invisibles—realities: demonstrated in the holy Life and triumphant Death of Mr. John Janeway, fellow of King's College, Cambridge.* We would that every reader of *these times* might, according to Baxter's recommendation in the preface, "learn by this history to place his religion in love and praise, and a heavenly life—to thirst after the good of souls, and fill up his hours with fruitful duty."

From this month's list we also see how variously the deaths of God's people are ordered. Zwingle died upon the field of battle,—Latimer and Ridley at the stake,—Doddridge and Martyn, worn out with consumption, on a foreign shore. We believe that God was honoured in them all, not even excepting Zwingle's,—for Zwingle was adverse to the war in which he died: he went not of his own will, but in conformity with the requirements of the law; and with his dying breath bore testimony to the truth which he had preached. He had been directed to accompany, as chaplain, a body of seven hundred men, who were despatched to support an advanced corps which had been posted at Cappel, and was attacked by the troops of Lucerne.

"In the battle which ensued, the Zurichers, though greatly inferior in number, animated by his exhortations, for a time defended themselves valiantly, but at length they gave way to superior force, and were entirely routed; the first ranks died at their post, and the rest sought their safety by flight. Zwingle, while encouraging the troops, received a mortal wound at the beginning of the action, and falling, remained senseless on the field. He recovered enough to raise himself up, and crossing his arms on his breast, he lifted his languid eyes to heaven. In this condition he was

found by some Catholic soldiers, who had not joined in the pursuit, and who, without knowing him, offered him a confessor. He made a sign of refusal, when the soldiers exhorted him to recommend his soul to the Holy Virgin. On a second sign of refusal, one of them in a fury exclaimed, 'Die then, obstinate heretic!' and pierced him through with his sword. His body was found and recognised the next day, and a group of spectators assembled around it, attracted by the celebrity of his name. One of these, who had formerly been his colleague at Zurich, after intently gazing on his face, thus uttered his feelings—'Whatever may have been thy faith, I am sure thou wast always sincere, and that thou lovedst thy country. May God take thy soul to his mercy!' Very different were the emotions of the savage herd: after exulting over the corpse of the leader of heresy, some voices exclaimed, 'Let us burn his accursed remains.' The proposal was instantly applauded; a military tribunal ordered the execution, and the ashes of Zwingle were scattered to the wind. Thus at the age of forty-seven he terminated his career. His death was deeply lamented by all the friends of the Reformation."

The martyrdom of Latimer and Ridley is too familiar to our readers to need to be related here. It is especially memorable for the reply of Latimer to Ridley. When the former had said, "Be of good heart, brother, for God will either assuage the fury of the flame, or enable us to abide it," the brave old man replied, "Brother, be of good comfort: to-day we light such a candle in England as, I trust, shall never be put out." We trust it never will. But religious indifference, the pride of life, and making haste to be rich, appear so deeply to possess the heart of the nation, that our Lord might, and perhaps will, say to England as he did to Ephesus: "Thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent."

Of the learned, virtuous, and, to sum up all her excellences in one, truly Christian female, Olympia Fulvia Morata, we regret that we have not now time to draw up even a slender notice. Bred amidst the luxuries and splendour of a court, she retired without repining to a private station; and it is difficult to say for which she was most fitted. But though "the observed of all observers," while surrounded by the noble, the learned, and the gay, the discipline of Providence caused her to adorn with a yet richer and costlier example of virtue the privations and afflictions of a life of exile. She has been justly placed at the head of those distinguished ladies of the sixteenth century, who united the proficiency of the scholar to the accomplishments of the gentlewoman. Yet her genuine, humble, devoted piety was her crowning recommendation. She died of consumption at Heidelberg, (where her husband, Andrew Grundler, was professor of medicine,) in the twenty-ninth year of her age. Her writings, which consist of letters, versions of Psalms, and a few other pieces, have been several times reprinted, and a memoir of her in English, which includes translations of some of them, and a notice of the times in which she lived, has passed through three

editions, the last of which appeared in London, in 1836. It is unfortunately much too diffuse and immethodical to do justice to its admirable subject; still it is impossible to read without interest the facts which it narrates, or the beautiful letters which are appended to the Memoir. Her life is, beyond all question, one of the most beautiful studies of female excellence, which her sex has the privilege of imitating.

Peter Paul Vergerio was, before his conversion to Protestantism, Bishop of Justinopolis, *in partibus*. It is not the manner of his dying, so much as that of his conversion, which has induced the mention of him in our list. From his conspicuous talents he had been employed in several ecclesiastical affairs of importance, and among other services had acted as the nuncio of the pope at the court of Ferdinand, King of the Romans. Having, in 1535, been recalled to Rome by Pius III., to convey to him exact information concerning the state of religion in Germany, he was again commissioned to confer with several of the Protestant princes, in the course of which he had an interview with Luther at Wittenberg. At the close of 1540, having in the mean time visited Italy again, he was at Worms as a deputy to the King of France. Returning from Worms, the pope, it is said, designed a cardinal's hat for him, but did not confer it, in consequence of insinuations that, while in Germany, Vergerio had imbibed some of the doctrines of Luther. Out of this circumstance, a train of events proceeded, which completely changed the course of Vergerio's life.

"Vergerio, when told the circumstance, was quite astonished; and in order to clear himself completely from all suspicions of that sort, he commenced the composition of a book which was to bear this title, '*Adversus Apostatas Germanie*'—Against the Apostates of Germany. To qualify himself for the prosecution of the work he had undertaken, he began diligently to investigate the opinions of the Protestants, and read the books of Luther, that he might lay the axe to the very root of heresy, and strike with a surer aim the most decisive blows. But by these means, Divine grace was preparing an event the least expected by him, even his own conversion. He found himself overcome and vanquished by a careful perusal of the writings which he had designed to confute and explode. He saw the corruption and impiety of that church, whose interests it had been the main business of his life to support and defend. In the utmost perturbation of mind, he went to confer with his brother, John Baptist Vergerio, Bishop of Pola, in Istria, which territory is a part of the Venetian state. This brother, in the last degree of astonishment, began to bewail the condition of Vergerio's understanding, and seemed rather at a loss what to do with himself, than how to give advice to another. At length they agreed to apply themselves together in searching the Scriptures, particularly to settle their minds on that all-important article—the justification of a sinner before God. While thus employed, the Spirit of God set home his word on both their hearts; and they became brethren in grace as well as in blood. They saw in the pure glass of revealed truth, the error of the Church of Rome upon the grand doctrine above referred to, as well as the absurdity, fallacy, and impiety, of many other tenets which it maintains. This was a new era of their life, full of deep interest, from the conflicting passions which agitated, and the terrors which threatened them. No sooner had the beams

of Divine truth illuminated their minds, than they were convinced it was a light too precious to be put under a bushel, or confined to their own bosoms. They therefore preached to the people of Istria the true doctrine of the Gospel, according to the measure of grace given them."

The Bishop of Pola, no great while after his conversion, died, as was supposed, of poison: his brother, the subject of our notice, died at Tübingen, where he was some time professor, and his funeral sermon was preached by the celebrated Andreæ, (in allusion to his having once been an active agent of the pope,) from 1 Tim. i. 13. On this occasion, Andreæ drew a parallel between Paul and Vergerio, as having both been brought to preach the faith they had before endeavoured to destroy.

For the particulars of Doddridge's decease we must refer to Orton's Memoir. A remarkable interest attends the deaths of Brainerd and Martyn, both of whom devoted their best energies to the conversion of the heathen, and were cut off in comparatively early life. The entire isolation of Martyn from all Christian society when he died at Tocot, prevented his friends from ever obtaining the particulars of his death; but he had often perused the beautiful account we have of Brainerd's aspirations after a better world, and there can be no doubt that he died in the same spirit. The following extract is taken from the beginning of a letter addressed by Brainerd to his brother, just before his departure:—

"I am now just on the verge of eternity, expecting very speedily to appear in the unseen world. I feel no more an inhabitant on earth, and sometimes earnestly long to depart and to be with Christ. I bless God he has for some years given me an abiding conviction, that it is impossible for any rational creature to enjoy true happiness, without being entirely devoted to him. Under the influence of this conviction, I have in some measure acted. O that I had done more! I saw both the excellency and necessity of holiness; but never in such a manner as now, when I am just brought to the side of the grave. Oh! my brother, pursue after holiness! press towards the blessed mark; and let your thirsty soul continually say, 'I shall never be satisfied till I awake in thy likeness.'

"The nature of his maladies was such, as subjected him to very acute and severe sufferings. Yet his patience continued unexhausted, his hope unclouded. Many very striking and instructive expressions fell from his lips, which we cannot here repeat. 'I as sincerely desire to love and glorify God as any angel in heaven. How infinitely sweet it is to love God, and to be all for him!' He ceased not to exhort his friends, and pour out his heart in fervent devotion, till October 8, 1747, when his conflict ended."

Brainerd died in his thirtieth, and Martyn in his thirty-second year. Both of them, like Janeway, had distinguished themselves greatly in their university studies, and they appear to have been, in all respects, of congenial temperament. Robert Hall, in his preface to the Memoirs of the Rev. Joseph Freeston, has written so beautifully respecting them, that we shall need no apology if we occupy the remainder of this paper with his account.

"The Life and Diary of David Brainerd, missionary to the American Indians, exhibits a perfect pattern of the qualities which should distinguish the instructor of rude and barbarous tribes; the most invincible patience and self-denial, the profoundest humility, exquisite prudence, indefatigable industry, and such a devotedness to God, or rather such an absorption of the whole soul in zeal for the Divine glory and the salvation of men, as is scarcely to be paralleled since the age of the apostles. Such was the intense ardour of his mind, that it seems to have diffused the spirit of a martyr over the most common incidents of his life. His constitutional melancholy, though it must be regarded as a physical imperfection, imparts an additional interest and pathos to the narrative; since we more easily sympathise with the emotion of sorrow than of joy. There is a monotony in his feelings, it must be acknowledged, and consequently a frequent repetition of the same ideas, which will disgust a fastidious or superficial reader: but it is the monotony of sublimity.

"The religious public have lately been favoured with a rich accession to the recorded movements of exalted piety in the Life and Religious Experience of the lamented Henry Martyn. It is delightful to behold in the history of that extraordinary man, talents which attracted the admiration of one of the most celebrated seats of learning, consecrated to the honour of the Cross; an enterprising genius, in the ardour of youth, relinquishing the pursuit of science and of fame, in order to travel in the steps of a Brainerd and a Schwartz. Crowned with the highest honours a university could bestow, we see him quit the luxurious shades of academic bowers, for a tempestuous ocean and a burning clime—for a life of peril and fatigue, from which he could expect no other reward than the heroic pleasure of communicating to perishing millions the word of eternal life. He appears to have formed his religious character chiefly on the model of Brainerd: and as he equalled him in his patience, fortitude, humility, and love, so he strictly resembled him in his end. Both, nearly at the same age, fell victims to a series of intolerable privations and fatigues, voluntarily incurred in the course of their exertions for the propagation of the faith of Jesus. And though their death was not a violent one, the sacrifices they made, and the sufferings they endured, entitle them to the honours and rewards of a protracted martyrdom. Their memory will be cherished by the veneration of all succeeding ages; and he who reads their lives will be ready to exclaim, 'Here is the faith and patience of the saints.' "

#### UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF THE REV. JOHN BERRIDGE.

*Everton, November 1, 1786.*

DEAR SIR,—I had bought some very strong good cloth to make two coats and breeches, for two very poor but upright preachers, and had sent it a fortnight ago, with a guinea to each to make the clothes up, with some thoughts of your bounty to eke the matter out, but I find you are no friend to eking, for you have made the whole up, with a remnant besides. On opening your letter, I gave the Lord hearty thanks for your donation, with a prayer for a blessing on the donor; and may his blessing ever rest on you and yours, Amen. I had much of my nervous fever in the summer, which kept me at home; and the Lord took away my hearing for three months, so that I was not conversable; then my eyes seemed to be going apace; and at one time, I had an apprehension of being both deaf and blind. At first, I prayed daily to the Lord for my hearing, but with submission to his will; and on Sunday fortnight, he gave me a better pair of ears—thanks be to his grace!—not perfectly restored, yet, so as to make me able to converse with comfort; and they seem still

to be mending. This has encouraged me to ask for a better pair of eyes. And why should I not? Jesus has eyes to give as well as ears, and he can bear dunning; nay, is never better pleased than with a thousand duns at his door. Well, my eyes are somewhat better,—thanks again to my Healer—and I keep praying on. I am glad to hear you write of a visit to Everton: we have always plenty of horse provender at hand, but unless you send me notice beforehand of your coming, you will have a cold and scanty meal, for we roast only twice in the week; let me have a line, and I will give you the same treat I always gave to Mr. Whitefield, an eighteen-penny barn-door fowl; this will neither burst you, nor ruin me. Half you shall have at noon with a pudding, and the rest at night. Much grace and sweet peace be with yourself and partner, and the blessing of a new heart be with your children!

With many thanks, I remain

Your affectionate servant,

JOHN BERRIDGE.

To Mr. Benjamin Mills.

P.S. Please to present my love to the trustees, and all the labourers.

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*Tabernacle, March 2, 1788.*

DEAR AND HON. SIR,—After I left St. James's-place, I spent the afternoon with Mrs. Peckwell, a precious woman, and a living instance of what grace can do. Some little gloom hung upon her countenance, but a cheerfulness appeared in her speech and temper. She did not, or she would not, seem to know of anything amiss in the Doctor, but spoke of him with great tenderness. The daughter is the very image of the father, and the son pleased me much. At five he came from school, and I asked him whether he had learned to swear. He answered, No. I asked further, has no one tried to make you swear? Yes, he said, many had tried, and once he was offered a guinea to make him swear, but would not. What nurseries of vice are public schools! and the next nursery is an university. If you can be of any service to Ann Street, you will do an act of kindness to a blind Christian woman. On Tuesday se'nnight I purpose to return to Everton, when I shall be released from gossiping visitors, and have leisure for the word of God and prayer. I am weary of my wretched self, and weary too of prattling visitors. No rest can I find but in God, in musing of Him, or in converse with Him. All things else are an aching void, promising something, but bringing nothing. The Lord Jesus fill you with his heavenly treasures, and make your seed a holy offspring. Much grace be with you, dear Sir, and with your truly affectionate servant,

JOHN BERRIDGE.

To John Thornton, Esq.

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*Tabernacle, January 10, 1789.*

DEAR AND HON. SIR,—Yesterday, I came to Tabernacle safe and well, after some delay and peril in the morning early from a rusty horse. The first five miles he went well, then would only walk, and turn about. At six, when the moon went down, he fell down, and would go no further. We were now eight miles from Stevenage, sitting cold in a chaise. I betook myself lustily to the good old remedy, prayer, and the Lord inclined a wagoner to lend us a horse to Stevenage, and put our rusty one into his team. Is not the Lord wonderful in working? who would distrust him? After this deliverance, attended with many thanksgivings, I had a fresh occasion for much joy and thankfulness, this morning, for your double tens for the poor, who will now be flocking for relief, like sparrows to a barley-stack in winter, and will have the comfort of your silver grains. I received your account of Mr. Hamilton, which is encouraging, but I commit all to my Master in daily prayer

telling him, the curate is not for me, but for himself, and desiring him to direct my kind friends in their search, and to direct the heart of a youth to Everton, who may profit the people. By means of constant prayer, my heart is quite at ease. Oh, the blessing of faith; thanks to my Jesus for a pittance of it! The Lord multiply daily mercies upon you, and bless your children with a heart-felt knowledge of his salvation.

I am, dear Sir,

Your truly affectionate and obliged

JOHN BERRIDGE.

To John Thornton, Esq.

*Everton, November 23, 1790.*

DEAR SIR,—Our years are rolling away fast, and will quickly roll us into eternity. How needful that admonition, "Prepare to meet your God!" Without earthly business to mind, my heart will rove in the world, get bemired in it, and stick so fast in a quag, I am forced to cry, Lord, pull my heart out. Thanks to grace, I have been crawling many years on the road to Sion, sometimes in, and sometimes out, and the Master has somewhat quickened my pace in the summer by a draft of birch wine, as needful at times for a heavy-heeled pilgrim, as the wine of the kingdom. Now being almost through the wilderness, very sick of self, and of a daggling world, I am drawing near to mount Pisgah; and when I stand on its top, the Lord give an open eye of faith to see all the promised land, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God! The windows of my house grow dimmer, scarce give a straight line, or spell a word right, and dislike a pen much; yet, thanks to the Lord, my health is better, my ears pretty stout, and my legs keep mending, are peaceable in a chair, though fretful in bed. I purpose, with the good leave and help of my Master, to set off for Tabernacle, on Tuesday, the 28th of December, unless a fall of snow then happen, which would delay me, till the roads are tracked; the Lord afford his presence, protection, and blessing! Blessed be God for a prospect of peace: much wrangling here about things civil and sacred, but no belligerents above, one heaven holds all, one temple serves all, and one Jesus feeds all, with his own love, joy, and peace. My eyes cry for quarter; so with affectionate respects to your partner, the trustees, and preachers, I remain, your much obliged servant,

JOHN BERRIDGE.

To Mr. Benjamin Mills.

"AND GOD SHALL WIPE AWAY ALL TEARS," &c.—REV. XXI. 4.

My soul with hourly griefs oppressed,  
Dismiss thy overwhelming fears,  
Anticipate the heavenly rest  
Where God shall wipe away all tears.

And though between that rest and thee  
The bitter waves of Jordan roll,  
Cheer up, thy passage safe shall be,  
To realms where death is known no more.

There, not a sorrow left uncured,  
Nor mournful cry shall e'er dismay,  
There, not a pain shall be endured,  
The former things are passed away.

J. S.



## REVIEWS.

*Christian Baptism. An Inquiry into the Scripture Evidence of its Nature, the Modes, Subjects, and Design of the Rite, and the Meaning of the Term.* By J. H. Godwin, Highbury College. 18mo. pp. 415.

*Baptism in its Mode and Subjects.* By Alexander Carson, D.D., Minister of the Gospel. 8vo. pp. 513.

*Modern Immersion directly opposed to Scriptural Baptism. In reply to Alexander Carson, D.D.* By James Munro, Minister of the Gospel, Knockando. 8vo. pp. 60. Snow.

*Essay on Baptism, with some Remarks on the Doctrine of the Nicene Church, on which Puseyism is built.* By Thomas Clarkson, A.M., Author of several works on Slavery and the Slave Trade. 8vo. pp. 60.

HERE are above a thousand pages more on the Baptist controversy. The subject must be very difficult, or the minds of men very perverse. Our Baptist friends say, that the latter is the case, not the former. Some among them do indeed give us credit for obtuseness of intellect, but the greater number, especially their leading men, incline to charge us with moral obliquity. This is not very complimentary to us, either as men, or as Christians: but let that pass; to our own Master we stand or fall. Whether we are more wicked than weak, or more weak than wicked, one thing is certain, that the holy and transforming truths of the New Testament, truths from which we separate, in our contemplations, all thought of that which is merely ritual, have failed to call forth such an array of advocates or opponents as we find banded together on the two opposite sides of this controversy. We should deem it a severe penalty to read even a tenth part of what has sprung up in this fertile field, the productive power of which, like one of good John Bunyan's favourites, seems to increase as it dispenses its bounty—

“A man there was, and some did count him mad;  
The more he cast away, the more he had.”

Some cultivate this field for the general good—others with a more confined view. The former have respect to the benefit of the church at large, the latter only to a section of it. The field of the former is the world; of the latter, a parish, or some confined locality. These are anxious either to make proselytes, or to prevent the members of their churches or congregations from being drawn away to another, and, as

they are convinced, a less scriptural communion. With whatever motives the books are written, printed, and circulated, one class of highly respectable tradesmen receive no little benefit from them. The booksellers have no ground of complaint. It will be a gloomy day for Paternoster-row, when this controversy is brought to a termination. Paper-makers, printers, folders, binders, carriers, porters, will suffer; and the great establishment in St. Martin's-le-Grand will suffer too; for, amongst the pamphlets which have been making their rapid transit by post from point to point throughout Great Britain and Ireland, not a few have reached us on the immersion side of the controversy. And one little fiery brochure, which met our eye at the breakfast-table one morning, all but plunged into our accustomed cup of beverage, (we could scarce rescue it from the dip,) in order eagerly to announce to us its decided opinion, that the missionaries of that society with which we happen to be connected, ought at once to abandon an extensive and only partially cultivated field, that it might be left to the exclusive possession of the sect to which the author of this igneous production was evidently most ardently attached.

To a quiet and calm observer—one, we mean, of a cool, philosophical temperament—all this appears amusing only; but to a man who duly appreciates the true spirit of Christianity, it is painful. What should we say, if a similar amount of time, toil, and expense were to be bestowed on the mode in which the Lord's supper ought to be administered, and the persons to be regarded as worthy participants? Only think for a moment what a field would be opened. Are we to sit, to stand, or to recline? Are we to receive it in the morning, in the afternoon, or in the evening? Are we to attend to it in our usual place of assembling for religious worship, or in an upper chamber? Are we to restrict it to males, or to extend it to include both sexes? Are we to observe it as a religious rite, in obedience to the command of Christ, every day, once a week, once a month, or four times, or only twice in the year? And then, what test are we to employ to ascertain the fitness of the candidates, and who is to be the judge of the degree in which the tested answers to the test? Many of these questions are quite as important, if not more so, than any which can be propounded relative to the Baptist controversy.

It is not a little remarkable, that while great differences of opinion have existed on the subject of these two ordinances, controversy has been almost exclusively confined to one of them. We have no strife between the sitters, the kneelers, and the recliners at the ordinance of the Lord's supper. We have no fiery dogmatism, interlarded with series of vituperative phrases, on the evening, as opposed to the morning observance of the rite. We have no separate sect formed; no new designation adopted to divide the *one-sense* interpreters of the word *ἄγιον* from all other Christians. No shouts of laughter and boisterous

cheering at the exposure, real or fancied, in an assembly of the *one-sense* men, of the errors or want of principle of their weak or wicked brethren. Whence this wide difference? Both ordinances have been abused by the Roman Catholic, and by other churches. Both are regarded by all consistent followers of our Lord as symbolic of spiritual blessings, as designed to aid the mind through the medium of the senses; the one to be attended to, as an initiatory rite, only once in the life of the Christian, the other to be frequently repeated, even down to the day of his death. The latter, then, appears the more important. Its very frequency of reception implies this. Would it not strike some stranger from a higher and holier sphere as monstrous, that the waters of strife should have been stirred on the less important, to the all but entire neglect of one single movement as to the more important rite; and yet more monstrous still, that of the less important, the minor point in this controversy, the mode, and not the subjects of baptism should be most insisted on? How is this strange infatuation,—it deserves no better a name,—to be accounted for? We can only think of one solution. This is to be found in our poor, weak, fallen nature, which, as it can learn and repeat the watchword of a party, so it can understand it with infinitely greater facility, than it can grasp and comprehend the wide circle of Divine truth, in its all-important bearings and relations. Thus it is sometimes in science; thus it is frequently in politics; and, alas! thus it is also in religion.

But we must notice the works we have placed at the head of these observations.

The essay of the venerable Thomas Clarkson is more remarkable for benevolence than for acumen. It evinces a justifiable fear of Puseyism, but is not quite the sort of production to cope with its subtleties. It may, however, be useful in the circle in which the advocate for liberty to the slave now moves. It is without any of the acerbity of the controvertist; and, addressed to members of the Established Church, its arguments are much better suited to tell on them, than on members of our Methodist, or more evidently dissenting brethren. Mr. Munro's pamphlet is on the mode of baptism, and is as remarkable an instance of compression, as the bulky volume it exposes (Dr. Carson's) is of expansion; and the former in this, as in most other cases, is stronger than the latter. Dr. Carson's is an extraordinary book. He himself has passed to his account, but his book lives, and of this we hesitate not to speak. It would be a fearful thing to have such a writer for an enemy; if evil indeed, could accrue to us from abusive vituperation, scornful epithets, and harshly supercilious sentences. We have read a few books written in this style, but Dr. Carson's excels them all. Swift might hence have enriched his description of the Yahoos; and the old enemies of the Methodists, who, some fifty or sixty years since, supposed they had arrived at perfection in this style, had hid their

blushing faces in their silk aprons, lawn sleeves, or behind the covers of the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews, could they but have had such a master as this. Here is "a king over all these children of pride."

What does such a style as Dr. Carson's evince? It certainly does not prove that the writer of it is ignorant or unlearned—for knowledge and learning are, unhappily, quite compatible with an ill-regulated temper; but it does prove the existence of great contempt for the opinions, the intellectual stores, and the mental powers of other men, and, moreover, no small amount of conceit, of self-sufficiency, and certain other unenviable dispositions, which shall be nameless. But yet more. Abusive epithets, and vituperative sentences and paragraphs, while they add not one jot nor tittle to the force of an argument, inevitably induce the suspicion, that the writer himself has some fears as to the strength of his position. They resemble that sound and fury to which, in the absence of thought, some public speakers have recourse. The arguments of a writer are not improved, while his reputation is put to fearful hazard by such a mode of conducting them. Far be it from us to say, that Dr. Carson was neither a scholar, a gentleman, nor a Christian. We fully believe he was the last; he had undoubtedly pretensions to the first; and it is *now* only this unfortunate volume of 513 pages in closely-printed octavo, that can introduce to any mind a doubt as to the second. But the true character of a man is not always seen in his controversial writings, especially when he is compelled, as every man must be who engages in the Baptist strife, to go over the oft and hard-trodden ground of verbal criticism. The very act of compiling, or even selecting and arranging such a mixed medley of dry materials, may well disturb the temper of a man who has no passion for the *hortus siccus* of etymology. Dr. C. has, indeed, hunted the panting syllables that compose the words βάπτω and βαπτίζω, from land to land, and from clime to clime, of this babbling earth, till he appears bewildered with the chase. We question if the same unsteady and half-vacant state of the intellect, does not happen to ninety-nine out of every hundred of the long list of subscribers, who may, perhaps, travel through the volume.

One obvious remark—obvious we mean to those who are acquainted with the laws of language—may serve to show, how much labour has in this controversy been lost in etymological inquiries into the primate meaning of words, and the ideas associated with their derivations in cognate tongues. The sciolist in biblical literature ought to be fully aware that the Greek of the New Testament is not classical, and that the idiom is the idiom of the Septuagint, and this of the Hebrew, whence it was translated, and in not a few portions, literally *transferred* to the Greek. To assign, therefore, a classical meaning to a Greek word in the New Testament, especially when that word designates a

religious rite, may lead to the grossest misconception of the sacred writers. Etymology is not to be lost sight of; but here, as in every other case, it ought to be the servant, and not the master. It may afford a little occasional aid, but it ought never to be permitted to take the lead, to order, or to direct. On these grounds we regard a vast mass of the learned references, re-arranged, or perhaps *re-collected*, in Dr. C.'s, and in almost all books on each side of this controversy, as out of place, a mere waste of paper, print, time, thought, and learned inquiry. The question, in the interpretation of the New Testament, is not, What does the word βάπτω, or βαπτίζω, or any other word, Δικαιωμα for instance, mean in Homer, in Esculapius, or even in Xenophon? but, What is its import in the Septuagint, and in the New Testament? In the true meaning of a word, Homer is the best interpreter of Homer, Longinus of Longinus, Chrysostom of Chrysostom, and the New Testament of the New Testament. It would appear hypercritical, or idly inquisitive, in ascertaining the meaning of the word μῆνις in Homer, to search through all writers of Greek, and from their concurring use of the word, to prove that it must mean *wrath*, when the same word in the same sense, or in a sense slightly deviating from it, is to be found in this same writer, some fifteen or twenty times. The scholar will in such a case be satisfied with Homer; the pedant may accumulate a hundred more authorities. When Dr. C. has proved that the word βάπτω or βαπτίζω has only one meaning, or more than one, he has done just as much towards settling this controversy, as is done by an opponent who in the same manner attempts to prove, from the same source, something different. One passage of the Old or New Testament will avail, where a hundred classical quotations will not.

Take an example from Godwin, pp. 46—51. But let the reader bear in mind an important fact—namely, this is the first time that the word occurs in the Septuagint version. “And Naaman went down and *baptized* himself at the Jordan seven times, according to the bidding of Elisha, and his skin became again as the skin of a little child.”\*

“What were the circumstances of this case? A Syrian officer of high rank, had long suffered from leprosy; and, hearing that there was a prophet in Israel by whom he might be healed, he came to seek his help. His disorder appears to have affected one part of his person, for he thought that the cure would be effected by the prophet's calling on the name of the Lord his God, and, putting his hand on the diseased place, that

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\* Καὶ κατεβη Ναυμαν καὶ ἐβαπτίσατο ἐν τῇ Ἰορδάνῃ ἑπτάκις. It is the Greek text that must determine the meaning, not the translation. This was made by those who favoured *dipping*; a mode of administering baptism which gradually crept in as the sensible and ritual grew into importance, and rose above the spiritual and simple; for dipping, with all that precedes, attends, and follows it, is much more imposing than the affusion now, happily, generally restored.

it might draw together, and be healed. Contrary to his expectation, Elisha did not even come down to him, when he stood at the door of his house, but sent by his servant this prescription; 'Go, and wash seven times at the Jordan, and thy flesh will return upon thee, and thou wilt be healed,' v. 10. Disappointed and indignant at the contempt with which he imagined he had been treated, and at the preference which he thought was given to the natural virtue of the Jewish waters, he resolved to return to his own land; that if he washed anywhere for his leprosy, it might be at Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus. But on the sensible and affectionate remonstrance of his servants, who reminded him how simple was the prophet's command—to wash that he might be healed—he changed his purpose, and, according to the direction of the man of God, he baptized himself. Now what is it likely that he did? and how is his action described? To reply to these questions, it is proper to ascertain what was the washing required by the Mosaic law in cases of leprosy, since this would determine the common practice; and the law and the practice together would probably determine the action of Naaman, and the language both of the historian and the translator. The law is given, Lev. xiv. 7: 'And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed for the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean. And he that is to be cleansed, shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself with water, that he may be clean.' This law consists of two parts, the first is ceremonial, the second is sanatory. The sprinkling seven times, was the testimony given by the priest to the leper's cure, and readmitted him to his social and religious privileges. The subsequent washing and shaving seem designed to remove the danger of infection. Now since the cure was in this case miraculous and complete, it is as likely that the prophet, in his direction, if he referred to the law, referred to what was ceremonial, as to what was sanatory. When he told the Syrian to wash seven times, he might allude to the seven sprinklings, which were usually received by the leper, as much as to the two washings and shavings of the whole person, which, with the interval of a week, were afterwards attended to. But if it be supposed, that it was to the latter that he referred, or that his direction merely corresponded to this part of the Mosaic law, then it is certain that the law did not enjoin dipping; and it is most improbable, that not being required, it should be generally practised. It is not impossible that Naaman dipped himself seven times in the river, but it is improbable, for the following reasons. 1st. He was only required to wash, and this term is repeated twice afterwards. 2nd. What he was to do is represented as a small thing. 3rd. His temper of mind was not that which would lead him to do more than was enjoined. And 4th. His action is stated to have been in accordance with the prophet's command. But to have dipped himself dressed would not have been the washing required. To have dipped himself, undressed, in public, would have been a needless and offensive operation.

"But whatever may have been the mode in which Naaman obeyed the prophet's order, that his action is not described as a *dipping* is evident, from these considerations. 1st. If so ordinary a signification was to be expressed, *Bárra*, or some common word might be expected, and not a word whose rare occurrence indicates that it had already some peculiarity of meaning, like that which it is found to possess afterwards. 2nd. There is nothing to show that dipping was in the thoughts of the writer, for there is no word in the context, and nothing in the scope of the passage, having the least relation thereto. On the contrary, while apart from the supposed signification of the word itself, there is nothing to lead to the supposition that Naaman was dipped, we know that he was cleansed. The action, however, performed, was a purification, and that it is presented by the historian under this aspect is probable. For, 1st, it is three times referred to under this aspect, as a washing, the end being expressed, and not the mode. 2nd. The cure is described immediately

after, by a term denoting both purity and health (καὶ καθαρίσθη.) 3rd. On this occasion, Naaman became a worshipper of Jehovah, and the historian relates his conversion to the Jewish faith. It is natural to suppose that the employment here of the word βαπτίζω, as well as that of the corresponding Hebrew term, was occasioned by the use of these words for the more solemn purifications by water, then observed by the Jews.

"If now we look to the words of other languages, most likely to exhibit the sense of βαπτίζω in this passage, we find the following. In the Hebrew text a word is used, denoting in the earlier Hebrew, to dip, to stain, to moisten.\* Its meaning, in the later Hebrew, cannot be ascertained, but by the considerations adduced, which are equally applicable to the Hebrew and Greek words in this passage. In the Chaldee Targum, the same word is put both for the precept and the performance.† It denotes both to dip, and to purify; and that it is used here in the latter sense is most probable, because the Hebrew for to wash, is never translated by a word signifying to dip, but often, when used in reference to sacred things, by a word denoting to purify.‡ In the Syriac version, a word denoting to wash or cleanse, is likewise put for both words; showing that, in the judgment of the translator of that ancient version, both mean to cleanse, or purify.§ In the Vulgate in the same manner, one word is employed, the direction given to Naaman is expressed by 'lavare septies in Jordane,' wash seven times at the Jordan; his obedience by 'lavit in Jordane septies,' he washed seven times at the Jordan. Whether these translators used the Hebrew text or not, is immaterial. It is most likely that they would understand the Hebrew in the same manner as the writer of this part of the Septuagint, and that, as they gave in their several translations, the sense of purifying expressing the end, and not the mode of the action, so he also employed βαπτίζω in this signification.

"From this examination of the context, scope, and ancient versions, it appears very improbable that Naaman was dipped; and very improbable, if he were purified by dipping, that the historian should describe this fact by a word expressive of its manner rather than of its design. On the other hand, it is certain that he purified himself, and the circumstances of the case favour the supposition, that his purification was, like all the public ceremonial purifications of the Jews, by sprinkling or washing a part of the person.

"The whole context of the passage, and the testimony of the ancient versions, support the opinion that here βαπτίζω means to purify, and that it was applied to sacred rites performed by water. For the supposition that Naaman dipped himself, and that here βαπτίζω means to dip, we have only the supposed radical signification of the Hebrew and Greek words. For the supposition that Naaman partially washed himself, and that βαπτίζω here means to purify, expressing the end and not the mode of washing, we have the accordance of this mode and meaning with the common feelings of men, with Jewish customs, with the prophet's command, with the servant's language, with the historian's comment, and subsequent statements, probably with the Chaldee Targum, and certainly with the Syriac and Latin versions."—*Godwin*, pp. 46—51.

\* Gen. xxxvii. 31, כִּבְּשׁוּ, "They stained the coat with the blood." Lev. iv. 17, "And the priest shall moisten his finger from the blood." Lev. xiv. 16, "And the priest shall moisten his right finger from the oil that is in his left hand." 2 Kings viii. 15, "He took a coverlet and moistened it with water, and spread it on his face, so that he died."

† כִּבְּשׁוּ, lavit, abluvit.

‡ כִּבְּשׁוּ, sanctificavit.

§ לָוָה, lavit, abluvit.



Mr. Godwin has written a volume of 400 pages in 12mo., on this topic. His courtesy to his Baptist brethren is great, for the single quotation we have made is of itself sufficient to show not only the weakness of Dr. C.'s favourite dogma, the *one sense*, and *one sense only*, of the word βαπτίζω, but the very strong probability, amounting to all but a moral certainty, that the mode was any other rather than that of the immersion of the whole body of Naaman in the river. Dr. C.'s alleged proof is, in this, as in all other similar instances, not a proof, but a mere *petitio principii*, in the thousand-times-repeated dogma, that the word means to dip, and nothing else but to dip. Before this mode of reasoning—a very easy one, and one therefore of which our Baptist brethren are very fond—all facts are fictions, all argumentation folly, all reasoning nonsense, and an accumulation of proofs from the Septuagint and Greek Testament, the very husks and chaff of literature and criticism. “The word βαπτίζω means *to dip*, and nothing else but to dip: it always has had this meaning, it never has had, nor ever will have any other, and there is an end of the whole matter.” Thus, excited with the vapour of classic lore, speaks the oracle: the sounds are as intelligible as any uttered in the groves of Dodona, or on the tripod of Delphi; but yet, oracles of old have erred, and we attach no strong faith to those of modern times.

It is more with sorrow than with anger that we see in the writings of our opponents such a mode of conducting a controversy. Dogmatism and denunciation, from whatever quarter they come, whether from the Vatican or a Baptist chapel, bring all rational controversy to a close. We should as soon think of reasoning with a lion in his lair, as with any pronouncer of mere authoritative prescripts. For such controvertists to enlarge on the philosophy of language, is as if a despot were to declaim on freedom, or a slave-dealer to pronounce an eulogy on liberty. All the learning, scraped together from all the books which have been written on one side of this controversy, and paraded before the weary eye in alleged proof of what is, after all, a questionable point, may serve to impose on the vulgar, but will tell but little on a man of sound mind. We are constrained to say, though the substance of Mr. Godwin's book has appeared in our pages, that there is more of real scholarship, sound reasoning, and valuable Scripture interpretation in a few pages of his work, than in all the apparently learned accumulations to which we have alluded. It ought to be carefully studied by our younger ministers, and divinity students; and we would recommend our Baptist brethren to peruse it, in connexion with Dr. Carson's book. To mention the striking contrasts which the two works present, would appear invidious. We, therefore, abstain.

*The Piedmontese Envoy ; or, The Men, Manners, and Religion of the Commonwealth. A Tale, by Prothesia S. Goss, Author of "The Philanthropist," &c.* pp. 295. London : Ward and Co.

HAVING recently expounded, and at some length, our views on works of fiction, it is not necessary that we should enter again upon the merits and demerits of such compositions in general, or of religious romance or novelty in particular. Suffice it to say the volume before us has but very little of the novel except in its title,—and those who purchase it for the sake of the tale will be woefully disappointed. We doubt, from a careful perusal of the work, whether the author possesses the particular ability which develops itself in the construction of a story. But she has something better. She has the truest, purest, and most noble sentiments in fitting phrase—and makes the princely souls whom she introduces to her readers, discourse in a style that does not misbecome the heroes of the seventeenth century. This is no mean commendation, and barely expresses our honest opinion of the author's merit. The full extent of it will appear, when we name the illustrious persons whom she has ventured to furnish with dialogue—Milton, Howe, Owen, Jeremy Taylor, Algernon Sydney, Sir Matthew Hale, Lord Wharton, Lady Ranelagh, Hampden, Cromwell, his lady and daughters. In fact, the volume of which we speak, is little more than a series of scenes, in which these parties present themselves successively to view, and deliver their sentiments, much as we suppose they might have done, upon a variety of topics most interesting to moral and social man. These topics embrace education, read sermons, forms of prayer, Christian union, primitive episcopacy, tithes, good ministers, regulation of the thoughts, suitable marriages, absurdity of parochial division, advocacy in courts of justice, millennium, religious disputations, George Fox, seekers, hypocritical profession, apostolic churches, the Popish confessional, torture, civil privileges of the Jews, &c. &c.

The judgment pronounced upon these multifarious subjects is most enlightened and scriptural. The volume is throughout distinguished by the rare combination of feminine delicacy and masculine vigour. So little of the novel appears in it, that we suspect its type is rather to be found in Landor's Imaginary Conversations, than in any fiction of a lighter order.

We have noticed several instances of extreme carelessness in the printing of the work. On page 123 "if" has fallen out of the form, and not been replaced. Page 136 has "*his* own sake," for "*its* own sake," the antecedent being "work;" 138 has "prophecyng" for "prophesying;" 148 has "tenfold" for "sevenfold," see Daniel iii. 19 ; "Thou hast too little charity" on page 193 is clearly ascribed to the

wrong speaker ; while, at page 263 the compositor's French has been sadly at fault, for instead of the common phrase "allons done," we have the rather ludicrous "allons, done, was the reply." "Stephenson" becomes "Stevenson" on the same page 133, and within the same half-dozen lines ; while the patriot "Hamnden" is invariably "Hamden," a mode of spelling the name new to us. These are minor blemishes, and detract nothing from the sterling excellence of Miss Goss's production. We know few books of the kind better adapted for reading in the family circle, and for giving correct views of the most important subjects. We heartily recommend it to our young friends.

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*The Power of the Soul over the Body, considered in relation to Health and Morals. By George Moore, M.D., Member of the Royal College of Physicians, &c. London : Longman, Brown, and Co. 1845.*

THIS is a good book, on a most important topic. The range is wide, and it is well occupied. The existence of a resident, intelligent, and powerful spirit beneath the veil of flesh is, by a variety of facts, incidents, and minute circumstantial details, irrefragably proved. That somewhat rickety science, phrenology, has its true place assigned to it, and the doctrine of other theorists, who verge towards materialism, if they are not actual materialists, is refuted and condemned. All this is done with the calmness of the philosopher, the temper of the Christian, and the skill of the most practised logician. It would be well were this book placed in the libraries of our young people, by the side of Combe, to counteract evil, and by Reed, Stewart, Browne, and especially Abercrombie, to illustrate and confirm the important truths these volumes advocate. There is a holy, chastened, modest spirit, pervading the volume, which places it in most advantageous contrast with much of the pretension of the day. The motto from Bernard is well chosen,—

"Thou hast a noble guest, O flesh !"

and the book may be regarded as a very beautiful illustrative commentary on it. It is divided into two parts,—the first, entitled, "The Soul, as manifested in the use of the senses, in attention and in memory," and the second, "The influence of mental determination and emotion over the body." We cannot pursue the analysis further, but the following chapter on the "Evils of Popular Phrenology" will supply a fair specimen of the character of this interesting volume.

"The dangerous tendency of the popular notions of phrenology, is most evident in the excuses it supplies to those who seek apologies for their moral depravity, and in the impediments it builds up in the way of those inquisitive minds that expect to find in nature a substitute for revelation. Many, convinced of the authority of the Bible, yet seem to see so much of demonstration in this pseudo-science at variance with the declarations of that strong book, that they are constantly hanging in suspense between the ruling faith, in the spiritual origin of thought, and the vacillating persuasion of the material beginning and end of mind. With such persons, morality and Christianity are thus at stake. A thorough, uncompromising, common phrenologist must apologise if he exhibit respect for either Divine or human government; since a will that owns no source but in the accidents of a man's organisation, can have no relation to the law which demands obedience for the common good. What good can there be to a mind unassociated, and indeed not existing, but with the body, except the individual's physical good? What community of interest can there be except among spiritual beings, that reason, love, and hate, on principles and under laws altogether distinct from any that regulate material combinations and results?

"If degrees of criminality, as some men teach, be determined by the relative development of portions of our brains, and not according to the degree of our knowledge and the kind of motives presented to our reason, through our affections in our training, then the language of the Great Teacher is a violence to our nature,—'*If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.*' These words appear to have no meaning, unless they signify that the extent of man's accountableness is commensurate with the degree of holy truth applied to his understanding.

"Although some of the prominent advocates of phrenology undoubtedly regard that somewhat rickety science as affording irresistible arguments in favour of the material theory of mind, and hence infer that the soul perishes with the body; yet there are many more who, most heartily following their confident leaders, believe themselves persuaded that phrenology is only a little less certain than the Gospel; and who nevertheless would not for the world forego their convictions of a spiritual and immortal existence. Some have taken a kind of middle ground, and while stanch in their attachment to the Christian creed, yet imagining they possess proof in phrenological facts that the soul has no being without the body, they have endeavoured to prove to their own satisfaction that the Bible reveals not a word concerning the distinct existence of the human spirit, but rather that it declares an utter death of both soul and body as derived from Adam. But then they dare not deny that an eternal life and bodily resurrection are promised and secured in Christ; so they are brought to the conclusion, that when a man dies he is annihilated as an individual being, and by the power of God is reproduced on some future occasion. Dr. Elliotson, President of the Phrenological Society, thus states, in the *Lancet*, the position which he adopts: 'By nature all die, are utterly extinguished; and in another order of things, when the fashion of this world shall have passed away, and time shall be no more, then in Christ, by the additional gift of God granted through the obedience of Christ, but consequently by a miracle, not by our nature, we shall all again be made alive.' If Christianity be true, then science, that is, the classification of natural facts, will never contradict it; for God must be the author of both. The scientific part of phrenology is therefore perfectly compatible with revelation. But infidelity has deeply stained the speculative and baseless assumptions which hasty reasoners have attached to that as well as other inquiries. It is however delightful to find, that men of the profoundest science most reverentially acknowledge that man and Christianity are productions of the same Mind, and that there is

nothing in any science at variance with the New Testament. Yet I cannot help thinking that Dr. Elliotson, whom we must believe to be a sincere Christian, on his own confession of hope for eternal life through Jesus Christ, has followed a false interpretation in the passage above quoted; for how is it to be reconciled with these texts?—‘*Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.*’ ‘*This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*’ ‘*We are confident and willing to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.*’ ‘*For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*’ These sentences seem plainly to express the fact of a spiritual existence, or being, at present distinct from the body, and capable of existence at once in another sphere. An array of arguments is not needed—this is sufficient: unless such language, and the abundance of the same kind, in the New Testament, can be proved to mean the apparent meaning.

“According to the newest fashion of phrenology, it is asserted that intellect and emotion, which imply will, operate through the brain as developed in the front of the head; and that will, associated with intellect, emotion, and instinctive propensity, acts upon the little brain behind, and part of the spinal chord, so as to excite muscular motion and expression. These conclusions may perhaps have been demonstrated, yet all we can infer from such presumed facts is, that the instruments or organs merely constitute the media of communication between the world without and the world within, the material creation and the spiritual. Facts are really best explained by supposing a unity of all the senses with the brain, and that the spirit, or perceptive and willing power, has faculties superadded, which are in correspondence with different portions of the brain, and therefore capable of being acted upon by it and acting with it. But how do some phrenologists account for the operation of compound motives, such as we often feel? They say it is done by a sort of sub-committee of the organs—by a board of control. As Abernethy used to say, ‘Pho, pho, if they go to a board of control, I am content.’ They thereby at once declare the necessity of a presiding and individual intelligence, endowed with various faculties as the properties of one being, subject to pain or pleasure, repugnance or desire, according as the objects presented to the mind through the senses are adapted, or otherwise, to these faculties or endowments, which are all associated with the will, in as far as they are all connected with a sense of the agreeable or disagreeable; and their very exercise consists in seeking the one and avoiding the other.

“Perceiving, thinking, willing. Meditate on these things. What are they? Look upon the brain and think. Now put the idea of a brain and your experience of thought and feeling together; then say whether organisation perceives, reflects, determines. Is thinking a property of the brain? No: the brain possesses all its material properties as well when dead as when living, and is as much a brain when uninfluenced by thought as when by it excited; therefore thinking is not a property of the brain: for if the properties of a substance be destroyed, the substance itself is destroyed. Is the brain constituted to secrete thought and feeling, as some assert? Where is the analogy between it and other discerning organs? Doubtless it may, and most likely does, separate something from the blood, perhaps electricity; and this it may do, because electricity is evolved in the circulation. All other discerning organs obtain and secrete matter chemically like that existing in the blood; but philosophers have not yet invented tests delicate enough to detect the elements of thought in the blood, where of course they ought to be, if separable from it by the brain. But this is a vulgar view of materialism. The philosophic materialists are more profound and refined. Doubtless with honest purpose they push on science to its limits; and finding matter everywhere, and spirit nowhere, they conclude that their own intellect results from atomic affinities, and of course

that the Mind of the universe—God, if He be—spring from eternal matter, which of course had no maker. In short, matter is their visible Almighty, and physical laws are his attributes and perfections. No wonder, then, that they believe in eternal death; the wonder is that they live and feel and thus reason.

"Surely as life is something more than mechanism, so thought is something above both. No mixture of substances can produce life, much less mind. Every living thing is something more than matter, something more distinct from matter than the elements are from each other; and it has been propagated, imparted, and extended from a preceding life, in a manner which matter cannot be; after a type existing in egg or seed, at first impregnated by the spirit of life, and hence evolving itself in onward generations, still multiplying while advancing. Thus also is it with the mind, which is something more than life; and every human spirit is like an imperishable reflection and visible evidence of Eternal Being, which first fell upon matter when Jehovah breathed life into man's body, and saw in man's mental and moral existence the everlasting image of Himself."

There are very few more suitable presents for young persons.

### THE EDITOR'S TABLE.

THE Scriptural Argument against Apostolical Succession, in its Fabulous Genealogy, its Claim of Supremacy for Peter, its Graduated Scale of Ministerial Orders, and its Perversion of the Rite of "Laying on of Hands." In Four Lectures. By Thomas Stratten. Post 8vo. pp. 244. London: John Snow.

A Review of the Principles of Apocalyptic Interpretation. In Three Volumes. By the Rev. Augustus Clissold, M.A. Oxford. 8vo. Vols. I. and II. pp. 358, 344. London: W. Newbery.

Remarks on a Charge of the Venerable Archdeacon Hare, delivered in the Parish Church of St. Clement, Hastings, on the 22nd day of July, 1845. By Philogothos. 12mo. pp. 24. London: J. Snow.

St. Bartholomew's Day Commemorated: or, The Principles of Congregational Dissent Explained and Defended. By A. Ewing, M.A. 12mo. pp. 38. London: Jackson and Walford.

Petra, the City of the Desert; a Poem. Nehemiah, a Poem. By James Talboys Wheeler. 8vo. pp. 16. Oxford: J. Shipton.

The History and Power of Ecclesiastical Courts. By Edward Muscutt. 8vo. pp. 52. London: John Snow.

Epistles to Swedenborgians, on the Paramount Peculiarities of their Creed. By William Edmund Sadler. 12mo. pp. 42. Ward and Co.

The "Silver Trumpet" Answered, and the Banner of Truth Raised. 18mo. pp. 72. London: Hamilton and Co.

Individuality, or Rite no Right, Elucidated by Scripture, with Plain and Illustrative Remarks upon the Nature, Character, Design, and Privileges of Baptism. 12mo. pp. 26. London: Nisbet and Co.

"The Catholic Claims" Considered. A Review of "A Letter to the Lord Bishop of Cashel, by Baptist W. Noel, M.A." 8vo. pp. 20. London: Whittaker and Co.

Prayers and Hymns. To which is added, The Millennium, a Poem. By Clara Coulthard. 18mo. pp. 106. London: Aylott and Jones.

Lectures on Behalf of the Jews. No. I. "Good-Will to Israel." By Dr. Macfarlane, Glasgow. No. II. "Hope for Israel." By Rev. R. Webb, Glasgow. 12mo. London: Aylott and Jones.

The Pupil's Manual of Exercises in Mental Arithmetic, &c. By Henry Hopkins, A.M. 12mo. pp. 120. London: Relfe and Fletcher.

The Teacher's Manual of Exercises in Mental Arithmetic, &c. By H. Hopkins, A.M. 12mo. pp. 232. London: Relfe and Fletcher.

Exercises in Composition on an Improved Plan: containing much Valuable Information, on various subjects. Fourth Edition. By Henry Hopkins, M.A. 12mo. pp. 258. London: Relfe and Fletcher.

Exercises in Orthography, on an Improved Plan, &c. Sixth Edition. By Henry Hopkins, M.A. 12mo. pp. 258. London: Relfe and Fletcher.

#### LITERARY NOTICE.

Memoirs of the Life of the Rev. Samuel Dyer, late missionary to China. By Rev. Evan Davies, author of "China, and her Spiritual Claims."

### CHRONICLE OF BRITISH MISSIONS.

#### HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

THE Directors intend to give in the next number some interesting accounts of the stations of the Society lately visited by their Secretary. It is sufficient at present to state that, from the inquiries made, the necessity for extended operations appears more evident than ever. It is at the same time highly gratifying to see the adaptation of the means employed by the Missionaries to do good, as shown in the conversion of sinners, and the outward changes on the face of society, where the Gospel has been successfully preached. Some facts of this kind will be mentioned which cannot but tend greatly to encourage the friends of Christ in sustaining Home Missions.

The Directors are happy to state that an old and generous friend of the Society has responded to the urgent appeal in the September Magazine by sending a donation of £50, as well as the first year's payment of £10, to be continued four years longer. The Directors wait with considerable anxiety, and with some hope, for similar responses, to fill up the lists particularly named last month.

We give the following statement from one of our Missionaries as it was sent to us. The *liberality* of the Rev. Sydney Smith, we fear, arose very much from *indifference*. The bigotry of the Puseyite clergyman was consistent with his High Church notions; so that he was quite consistent in getting rid of a Dissenting teacher. The *manner* in which he did so is another matter. The reader cannot but admire the firmness of principle shown by the schoolmistress. We hope that some school sustained by consistent Dissenters will obtain the valuable services of a person who has given up all her living rather than act against conscience. We have given the extract *chiefly* to bring the case before the friends of religious liberty—not so much to excite anger against the clergyman as to induce those whose views are in harmony with this young person, to take care that she does not continue to suffer from her firm adherence to conscience and to truth. We trust the case will produce sympathy, and lead to some good result. We shall be glad to announce that she has obtained a better situation than she would have had under the Puseyite rector of C—— F——.

#### *Puseyism—Distressing Case of Suffering for Conscience' sake.*

"In one of our villages we shall immediately suffer loss by the removal of a very pious and useful young person connected with us. She has been for eight years the mistress of a day-school, which was under the patronage of that very liberal and influential clergyman, the Rev. Sydney Smith, a few months since deceased. His successor is a Puseyite, and on entering his parochial charge he found she was not a member of the Established Church. He expressed himself as being much pleased with her in every respect but one. She was a *Dissenter*, and, consequently, wholly



incapacitated for his purpose, the infusing of the principles of Puseyism into the minds of the children. He told her at once he could not continue her in the school unless she gave up her connexion with the Dissenters. 'Dissent,' he said, 'is a heresy, and the children must be taught that it is a heresy;' but it was not likely that she would teach them *that*, unless she gave up her Dissenting principles and connexions. He then promised personal favours, with an increase of salary, if she would comply with his wish; and said he would give her a fortnight to think of it and pray over it. It was certainly a strange matter to pray over. Did he think, I wonder, that God would blind her judgment and destroy her conscience, that she might accede to his wishes? At the end of the fortnight the clergyman came, accompanied by his lady, to receive the answer of prayer, and the result of her thoughts. It was this: 'I should be glad to continue in the school, as I did with Mr. Smith. I think I have been useful in it, and it would be a comfortable maintenance for me, and enable me to stay with my aged father: but, Sir, I would rather give up my situation than my principles and connexions, and, therefore, I will leave.' His wife then began to abuse her, stating she was obstinate and sulky; and with this they left. Our young friend acted in this as a Christian should act, and her example has already been beneficial in the neighbourhood. And now our prayer is, that she may realise what many have done before her who have suffered loss for Christ, by receiving a hundredfold more in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting."

The following extracts refer to a practice that is now forcing itself on public attention, in consequence of the demoralising effects produced by it:—

*Cheap Sunday Trains on Railroads.*

The railway referred to in the following communication is that between Newcastle and Carlisle. The directors of this line have the unenviable notoriety of being among the first to begin this immoral system. The writer of these introductory lines has, during the past month, visited the neighbourhoods of Newcastle and Carlisle: while there he obtained most distressing accounts of the demoralising effects produced by cheap Sunday trains. All along the line of railway crowds of idlers and immoral persons are poured out upon the villages and hamlets; besides the injury done to Carlisle itself, by the immense numbers who visit that city on Sundays for pleasure. Connected with this open violation of the law of God, is the offence of trying to serve God and mammon. The writer saw large placards at every station announcing the fact to the young and half devout, as an inducement to tempt them, that the train would take them in time to attend *Divine service* in the cathedral, and after that there would be time to see the beautiful scenery around that city. Surely the friends of good order and of religion should discountenance in every possible way those railroads, the directors of which are so eager to increase their gains, that they encourage the desecration of the Lord's-day.

*Demoralising Effects of Cheap Sunday Railroad Travelling—Attempt to counteract the Evil—Persevering in Labour.*

"I continue to meet with an encouraging degree of prosperity in my labours in this part of the Lord's vineyard. There are, indeed, several who professed to have experienced a change of heart, and to have given themselves to the service of God, who have been again entangled in the ensnaring temptations of the world. Several others who continued to maintain their steadfastness, and whose character and influence promised usefulness in connexion with our cause, have, in the providence of God, been called to leave this part of the country. There have also been influences felt which powerfully tend to counteract the means employed for the moral and

spiritual good of the people; for example, Sunday travelling by the railway. For several months past there have been trains on the Sabbath-day at very reduced fares, and which have received but too much encouragement from the unthinking part of the population. Such a practice has tended more to fill the public-houses, than the places of worship; and, consequently, the demoralising effect has been seen and lamented by every truly serious mind. With a view to guard our people from temptation, we have taken up the subject of the Sabbath-day for examination in the Bible-class, and for a series of weeks we have had the subject under consideration in public, when the following topics were taken up:—The Lord's day as a Divine institution—the perpetuity of its claims—the nature of the exercises which it requires—the good effects connected with its observance. I am happy to perceive that our people now seem generally to act as if prepared rather to submit to inconvenience, than to give any encouragement to cheap trains on the Sabbath-day.

"Amidst all the demoralising influences by which we are surrounded, the work of the Lord still continues to prosper amongst us; our various services continue to be well attended; serious impressions continue to be awakened on the minds of the unconverted; we are still favoured with seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; the Spirit of the Lord still moves in the valley of dry bones. At our last church-meeting four persons were received into church-fellowship; one of them a female, who had for some time been a regular hearer, and who had occasionally been impressed under the word, but who still continued in a state of indecision. One Sabbath, after the forenoon service, she called upon me in a state of deep concern for the salvation of her soul. After having directed her mind to the all-sufficiency of the blood of Jesus to cleanse from sin, and to impart peace to the soul, I promised to see her again soon. I accordingly had several interviews with her during the course of the week, but still she could not realise a sense of her interest in the blessings of salvation. On the following Sabbath she again called upon me at the close of the forenoon service, and told me that now she saw the way of salvation; that now she found peace in believing; and that she was now resolved to cleave to Christ as her only Saviour. Of the other three individuals, one is a man who, upwards of ten years ago, had made a profession of religion, and was a member of a Christian society, but who had fallen into a backsliding state, and was living in entire disregard to all means of grace: he is now restored to God and the enjoyment of peace through the belief of the truth. The other two are females, who have also afforded satisfactory evidence of their having experienced a saving change. In my village labours and other departments of service I meet with increasing encouragement."

*Open-air Preaching.—Conversions in the Union Workhouse.—Success to Village Labours.—Visit to an unpromising and unprofitable Station.*

"During the summer months I embraced opportunities for proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation in the open air. On these occasions I had seldom fewer than four hundred hearers, and many of them were never within the walls of a sanctuary. To what extent the word preached has been accompanied with the Divine blessing in the conversion of sinners, is known only to Him with whom is the residue of the Spirit. But were we to judge from the solemn and fixed attention with which they listened to what was spoken, and the deep impressions which on different occasions seemed to be made, we should certainly conclude that some of the seed did fall in good ground. Some little opposition to this species of labour has been manifested. One of our members has been served with a notice to quit his house simply because he accommodated me with a chair on which to stand while pointing my fellow-sinners to the Lamb of God. It is looked upon by others as disreputable; but while

we have the high example of our Lord and his apostles, we are willing to bear the reproach if by any means we may be instrumental in saving souls.

"I am in the habit of preaching in our union workhouse every third Sabbath, and I have often felt discouraged from the apparent unconcern with which the people listen to the proclamation of mercy. I was lately, however, summoned to the death-bed of one of the inmates, and my heart was filled with joy while listening to the conversation of the dying man. When I entered he grasped me firmly by the hand, the tears ran down his aged cheeks, and, with a full heart, told me that under my instructions he had been brought to rest his eternal all in Christ crucified. He was evidently hastening to the close of his earthly pilgrimage, but neither death nor the scenes beyond it disturbed his soul. His mind was in perfect peace, being stayed on the Rock of his salvation. I embraced the opportunity for addressing all the others who were in the hospital, and then engaged in prayer. On rising from my knees I found many of them bathed in tears. This is the second instance of real conversion to God, which has come to my knowledge, attributed to my preaching in the workhouse. One of them still lives, and appears to be walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost; and the other has gone, I trust, to be with Christ, which is far better. May the Lord still more abundantly pour out his Spirit, and make many of these poor people 'rich in faith, and heirs of an everlasting kingdom!'

"During the past quarter three persons out of one family have been received into the fellowship of the church—a father, a mother, and a son—all of whom trace their first impressions and ultimate decision for God to my village labours. These are encouraging facts; but I have not been without some of those trials which we have occasionally to endure from 'false brethren.' We have had some cases of apostasy, and their separations from the church caused me much pain. I feel thankful, however, that nothing has occurred to disturb the general peace and harmony of the church. I found the members quite ready to obey and follow out the laws of their Redeemer in order to preserve the purity of his house. Such cases of defection bring much disgrace on the cause of Christ; but when his laws are strictly obeyed, I have no doubt all will be overruled for the furtherance of the Gospel.

"I lately spent four weeks from home in two of the neighbouring counties. At the request of a devoted and liberal friend to our cause, I spent two Sabbaths at a Missionary station in connexion with the — Union. There I found religion in a very low state. The congregations on Sabbaths were small, and on the week-evenings I could not succeed in getting more than eleven auditors. I visited several of the people in their own dwellings, entered freely into conversation, and left with each family a suitable tract. I found them in general fearfully ignorant, and there appeared a reigning indifference to eternal things. I was sorry to find that the small church had not a single prayer-meeting, and, with one solitary exception, nothing was doing for the salvation of the perishing around. This is not as it ought to be, and is sufficient to account for the deadness which prevails. I found the same restraining of prayer in other places which I visited, and in all there was the complaint, 'No real good is doing.' How can there? Oh! when will our churches awake to a sense of their responsibility, and plead and wrestle with God for the outpouring of his Spirit for the salvation of our bleeding country! It is surely 'high time to awake out of sleep.'"

*Ignorance near Oxford.—Inefficiency of the Parish Church and dislike to Dissenters.*

I insert the following extract from the *Oxford Chronicle*, of August 2nd, 1845, as a specimen of the degradation of privileged Oxfordshire, the inefficiency of the Church of England, and a corroboration of statements which your agent has already made respecting the condition of the villages surrounding this station:—

"Worminghall. On the 23rd instant an inquest was held at the Almshouses, at Worminghall, before J. W. Cowley, Esq., on view of the body of George Payne, aged seventy-six, an inmate, who died suddenly on the previous day. The principal witness was a shepherd boy, in the employ of Mr. Sheen, farmer, who was in the field where deceased was at work when he expired. On the coroner questioning the boy, he found such a lamentable ignorance of Christian truths in him, that he hesitated for some time as to whether he should give him the oath or not.

"The boy said his engagements prevented his attending a place of worship, and that he had not been taught the church catechism. The coroner said he found it difficult to reconcile the boy's ignorance of scriptural truths with the apparent religious privileges the parish presented, there being daily service at the church. The above-named farmer has threatened to turn out of his employ any one who should admit any 'Dissenting teacher' under his roof. Surely this cannot be the land of the free!"

*The Colliers' Anniversary, and a Pitman's Speech.*

"On Thursday, July 24th, we held our Colliers' anniversary at B—. As we assembled at the early hour of half-past three in the morning, we found the atmosphere to be somewhat cold and damp; but the promptness with which the people came together speedily dispelled every symptom of gloom, and the spirit that evidently dictated and guided the whole of the prayers and speeches, was such as to produce the most delightful and animating effect. We assembled in the open air, and as the place of meeting was on an eminence, our songs of praise might be heard at a considerable distance. Four colliers gave out hymns and engaged in prayer, and the ministers gave addresses. It was truly humbling, and as truly pleasing, to witness the proceedings of the service. The colliers were all in their working dress, and during the time of prayer knelt down on the cold ground, placing themselves in a semicircular form. We have read with peculiar interest the speeches of some of the converted natives on foreign stations; but with still greater delight did we listen to the plain, unadorned address delivered by an old collier, who has been many years converted to God, and who is a native and an inhabitant of B—. He had been requested to pray; he complained of great weakness, his health for some time had been considerably affected. He begged to be allowed to say a few words in the form of an address, which was in substance as follows:—

"My dear friends,—There is one man among you that prays for all the rest every day in the year, and that makes three hundred and sixty-five prayers presented to God on your behalf, by one man only. Now, only think of three hundred and sixty-five prayers in one year, and all for the salvation of your precious souls. Yes! it is for your salvation he always prays, and what a blessing! it will be to you, should his prayers be answered and you saved! A blessing which is indeed unspeakable, and yet you may all possess it. Now, there are three ways by which you may get this blessing: you may beg it, you may buy it, or you may steal it. You may beg it—for, did not our Lord say, 'Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you?' and this blessing so great as the salvation of your souls may be had for begging, oh, go at once to mercy's door, 'for now is the accepted time, and this is the day of salvation!' This blessing is also to be bought, but not with your money, for it is written, 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk, without money and without price'; and as you may both beg it and buy it, so you may steal it. Have ye never heard of the poor afflicted woman, who spent all that she had upon physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, and when she heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his clothes, for she said, 'If I may but touch the hem of his garment, I shall

be whole.' Now you see how she got in among the crowd, without being seen, and stole the blessing she so much desired; but she could not keep the secret, for she was so astonished at that which was done in her, that she came fearing and trembling, and fell down at the Saviour's feet, and told him all the truth.'

"This speech of the old collier produced a wonderful feeling. The whole company was in tears, and we hope to see the fruit of our efforts in the salvation of some of the rebellious."

#### IRISH EVANGELICAL SOCIETY.

THE report of this Society's operations is now in the hands of its friends; and the Committee would earnestly entreat every individual who is concerned for the spiritual welfare of the sister country, attentively to peruse both the document itself and the appendix. The reports of our different institutions are often neglected. This is a great injustice to the committees who conduct them, and to the important objects they are labouring to promote. It may be confidently asserted that the reports of all our religious societies for a single year, present such a multitude of facts as ought to be sufficient to make the heart of every Christian to shout aloud for joy. Could they be brought together, and exhibited to our attention at one view, they would constitute a scene on which angels would love to gaze, and God himself look down with complacency and satisfaction. Amongst those documents the Committee of the Irish Evangelical Society rejoice to place their report for the past year; and in doing so would venture confidently to say, that its contents will amply repay the time its perusal may require; and will show that God is blessing the efforts of the agents amidst the appalling difficulties with which they have to contend. From glancing at the past, which the report now referred to leads them to do, the Committee would turn to the present. They continue to receive encouraging statements of the progress of the cause at some of the stations; which clearly show that when a pastor, missionary, or Scripture reader, is devoted to his work, and labours in his own appropriate sphere with assiduity, and in the spirit of the Gospel, there are never wanting tokens of the presence and blessing of that Saviour and Lord whose servants they are. The assurance of this increases the regret the Committee feel when they are compelled, *for want of funds*, to return answers in the negative to appeals made to them for additional labourers. Several important stations could at once be occupied were the Committee furnished with sufficient resources to meet the expenditure they would involve. But they dare not venture on any of these whilst the income of the Society is barely adequate to sustain the present scale of operations. They would, however, cherish the hope that our British churches will ere long awake to the claims of the sister land, and send a sufficient number of well-qualified and devoted men who shall proclaim the glad tidings of salvation throughout the length and breadth of that interesting, but superstitious, portion of the empire.

It is gratifying to the Committee to be able to bear an unhesitating testimony to the character of their agents, who, by their conduct, have won for them the esteem and affection of those amongst whom they have laboured. The following circumstance affords an evidence and illustration of this:—The Rev. H. G. Brien, who has laboured for several years in the town of Dungarvon, in the county of Waterford, has recently been appointed by the Committee to fill up the vacancy at Donegal, occasioned by the removal of Messrs. Jordan and Murray to Castlebar. On his retirement from Dungarvon, a public meeting was held, which was presided over by the Rev. Mr. Dill, Presbyterian minister at Clonmel. A gold watch, with its appendages, was presented to Mr. Brien, as a testimony of the respect and affection in which he was held, and the following address was delivered on the occasion:—

"Rev. and dear Sir,—As it hath pleased the great Head of the Church, in his infinitely wise providence, to call you from amongst us to labour in another part of his vineyard, we, your Protestant friends of this locality, impelled by a sense of duty to yourself, and to the cause of evangelical truth, of which you have been the uncompromising advocate, desire publicly to express and testify our respect and esteem for your private worth and ministerial labours. During a period of seventeen years you have discharged with unwearied discipline the various duties of a Christian missionary, in the midst of many discouragements. You have proclaimed the great truths of the Gospel in all their fulness, and have sown the good seed of the kingdom, which may bring forth fruit many days hence; and you have ever exhibited the great principles of the Protestant faith, as founded on, and agreeable to, the word of God.

"In the more private duties of a minister of Christ, we have witnessed with much satisfaction your visits of sympathy and consolation to the sick and afflicted, to the aged and infirm. Much of your time has been devoted to the religious instruction of the young. In you the poor have ever experienced a warm benefactor; and to all you have been endeared as an attached and faithful friend.

"Dear Sir,—As a memorial of the feeling of respect which we entertain for you, we beg your acceptance of the accompanying gold watch, which may hereafter testify to your worth, and our appreciation of your character.

"In taking our leave of you, we pray that the Divine presence may accompany you; that the Spirit from on high may abundantly bless your labours, so that the pleasure of the Lord may prosper in your hands; and, finally, it is our fervent prayer that your beloved partner, and the family whom God hath given you, may be bound up in the bundle of life with the Redeemer."

To this address Mr. Brien returned the following answer:—

"My dear Friends,—The period having arrived when our connexion in this place terminates, I most fervently pray that the anticipated change may be blessed to us all. The approval of my conduct as an evangelist, thus publicly expressed, during a period of seventeen years, is flattering to my feelings: but to God be all the praise and glory!

"In my intercourse with you, I had, as you say, to contend with many discouragements. The field of missionary enterprise was uncultivated; the seeds of error were growing most luxuriantly. These have, in some measure, been eradicated; and, by the blessing of the Holy Spirit, a change has been produced. In visiting the abodes of sorrow, I laboured night and day to administer the remedy prescribed by the great Physician of souls. The rich and the poor have been taught the need of a free salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

"Your memento I receive with many thanks; I accept it as an evidence of the attachment of Christian friends; and as an assistant to mark the time for the profitable instruction of others.

"Dear friends, farewell! Improve the present eventful period. Cultivate a more scriptural and decided union with the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ; which is your duty, for 'by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another.' 'Let your conversation be as it becomes the gospel of Christ: that whether I come again, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel.' 'Abstain from all appearance of evil; and the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.'"

Mr. Brien has arrived in Donegal, where, the Committee trust, that, by his Chris-



tian spirit and his devoted zeal, he will be rendered a great and extensive blessing in that important station.

## COLONIAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

THE writer of the subjoined interesting letter, the Rev. Moses Parker, is employed in a laborious itinerant service in Van Diemen's Land, sustained jointly by the Colonial Missionary Society and the Van Diemen's Land Home Missionary Society. His sphere of labour requires great efforts in journeying and preaching, and separate him very much from the pleasure and benefit of society. His efforts among the convicts are as important as they are self-denying and arduous. This explicit and thankful letter proves that they have not been in vain in the Lord, but that grace has abounded to some unlikely characters. Government seems resolved to render Van Diemen's Land permanently and extensively a penal colony, in spite of all the remonstrances of the free colonists. If so, such labours as those of Mr. Parker will be but the more indispensable.

"7th January, 1845.

"My last letter was in the month of February, 1844. Since then I have had great reason to praise God for his goodness and grace in enabling me to proceed without interruption from ill health or other causes, with my labours, which are difficult beyond an ordinary degree. The places of stated Sabbath services then were Carlton, Cambridge, and Richmond. To these has been lately added another on the river Heron. The attendance at the two first-named places has rather improved than otherwise, while at Richmond it has greatly improved. Here I reside, and from my first entering on my labours I saw the great importance of devoting especial attention to this portion of my district. I first began a Tuesday evening lecture, then a prayer-meeting, and after some time an adult Scripture-class. I am happy to say that these are continued with unabated interest. I thank God that he enabled me to commence these services. They were emphatically the work of faith, and some might, and I believe did, consider them at the time as likely to end in disappointment.

"The week-day services, with the exception of the Tuesday lecture, are held at my own house, as we have not yet a chapel here. In my last I informed you that no instances of conversion had occurred under my ministrations. Blessed be God, I have not to repeat that sad tale. About six months ago it was evident that a gracious change had taken place in an old man who had lived in the place for eleven years, and who had travelled over many countries as a soldier. Soon after another, and almost at the same time another, came over to the Lord's side. Suffice it to say, that I was enabled, after mature deliberation, repeated conversations with the young converts, and close inspection into their lives, and consultations with the pastors of our churches and others, to form a church on Congregational principles. The church comprised seven souls, including myself. Since its foundation another has been added, and I believe I may say two others are about to be proposed for admission at our next church meeting. It is worthy of notice that five out of the eight members are prisoners, and three of them have been notorious offenders. One of them told me that he cared little for being flogged. Perhaps, however, I have written with sufficient minuteness on this point in my last report, which you will see. I presume there is a feeling more or less prevalent on the minds of many, that Missionary reports would not always bear being published on the scene of action; but, in this case, I fear nothing. Here are the people. Their former conduct is known—their present is known. The Gospel has made here sober men of drunkards—honest men of thieves—and chaste persons of the lewd. I might say much more;



my heart is cheered by the conduct of these people. A year ago I saw their lives, and what a delightful change! This change, too, has affected their children, their own dress, and domestic comforts. Christmas is here a time of frightful drunkenness and crime. I was very anxious, as you may suppose, to see how these dear people would hold out on the late days of wickedness. Thanks be to God, they have overcome. In the midst of almost universal revelry and shame, they have stood unspotted from the world. I endeavoured to prepare their minds and hearts against the temptations they had to encounter. On Christmas morning we had a prayer-meeting, in the evening a public service, and on the last evening of the year another public service, besides the usual private ones. On the day after Christmas-day, commonly called here 'boxing-day,' I found, to the great joy of my heart, two of my people at work in the most public part of the village, and hard by a public-house. They said it was the first Christmas they had ever thus spent. I do hope that their exemplary and decidedly Christian conduct will, on this occasion, be of much good to the cause and kingdom of our Lord. My own heart is encouraged, and my hopes for the future brightened. I have been endeavouring to excite these poor people to greater zeal at the beginning of this year. I hope it will be a year of blessings. If you knew the many very discouraging circumstances, and petty opposition which I have to encounter, you would say I have great reason for gratitude. Heretofore we have had only one Sabbath-day service in this place, but we commenced a morning one last Sabbath, which, I hope, by the assistance of friends from Hobart Town, I shall be able to continue. I get a supply from town when I visit distant places. The new station opened at the river Heron is of a most promising nature. The distance from this is about fifty miles. The last time I was there, I preached three times on the Sabbath, and gave an address on the nature of infant baptism, rode home on the following day, and was at my own house in time to conduct the prayer-meeting. This will give you some idea of the nature of my labour. Here I hope God is beginning to show his power to save. There is a great stir made by the preaching of the Gospel. It is quite a new thing there. The people express their thankfulness. I am not without hope of being able to organise a church there this year. I might have mentioned that the members of the Church here take deep interest in the missionary reports as they come to hand; and though very poor, they have begun to contribute their little in aid of the great cause. I would conclude in the words which formed my text on the last Sabbath morning, the first in the year, 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.' To him be the praise and the glory for ever!

"I remain,

"Your servant in the Gospel,

"Rev. A. Wells.

"M. PARKER."

## TRANSACTIONS OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

### THE SEVENTH AUTUMNAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES.

ON Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, the 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th of October, will be assembled at Manchester, the Seventh Autumnal Meeting of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. In the three mornings of the Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, there will meet for fraternal counsel and prayer, three, perhaps four, hundred ministers and other brethren of our Congregational churches. In the evenings of those same three days more public meetings will be convened for objects of the first interest and moment, not to our own body only, but to the

Christian church and the nation at large. Former autumnal meetings of the Union have proved most happy seasons. Still higher expectations of benefit and pleasure may be reasonably entertained on the present occasion. The place of meeting raises hope. Where can meetings promise greater efficiency than among the brethren and churches of Manchester? The time raises expectation. These meetings will follow the convention for union at Liverpool. Opening events on all hands render the present a period of equal difficulty and interest. For the Manchester meetings, prayers, and supplications, and giving of thanks, are claimed of all the brethren.

It is hoped, therefore, that this will prove one of the most influential assemblies of the Congregational brethren held in recent times, and that it will be productive of permanent practical benefits to the whole denomination. The attendance of brethren is affectionately invited. A spirit of peace, love, and wisdom, is earnestly desired. It is a time in which faithful brethren ought to cheer, advise, and encourage one another. Subjects of great and immediate importance will be submitted for discussion. May the Divine blessing crown all the proceedings!

The arrangement of the various meetings is as follows:—

1. The meetings to be held at Manchester, commencing on the evening of Monday, the 13th, and closing on that of Thursday, the 16th of October.

2. All brethren intending to be present on the occasion are particularly requested to announce their design by letters addressed to "Joseph Grave, Esq., solicitor, 1, Bond-street, Manchester," on or before Saturday, the 4th of October, in order to facilitate arrangements for their accommodation. The Committee managing this department cannot hold itself responsible for the reception of any gentleman not giving the notice thus requested.

3. On Monday evening, the 13th of October, the proceedings will be opened with a public prayer-meeting, to be held in Moseley-street Chapel, the Rev. Dr. Halley's, commencing at seven o'clock.

4. Morning meetings of delegates and visitors will be held in the Roby School-room, Grosvenor-street Chapel, the Rev. Richard Fletcher's, on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, the 14th, 15th, and 16th of October, to commence precisely at half-past nine, and to close with the same punctuality at half-past two o'clock, on each day. Chair to be occupied by the Rev. John Burnet, of Camberwell.

5. Tuesday evening, a public meeting to promote education, popular, ministerial, and lay-collegiate, will be held in Chapel-street Chapel, Salford, the Rev. Dr. Massie's. Wednesday evening, a public meeting in aid of British Missions will take place in Grosvenor-street Chapel. And on Thursday evening a public meeting to set forth and support the principles and operations of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, in Moseley-street Chapel, will close the proceedings. At each of these three evening meetings the chair will be taken precisely at half-past six o'clock, and it is intended that, at the latest, these services shall close at half-past nine.

6. Collections in aid of British Missions will be made in the several chapels in Manchester and Salford, on the Lord's-day following the meetings now announced, namely, the 19th of October.

#### ORDINATIONS, ETC.

Mr. Robert Simpson (son of the Rev. A. C. Simpson, LL.D., of Long Sutton, Lincolnshire, and grandson of the late Rev. Robert Simpson, D.D., Theological Tutor of Hoxton College, London,) has accepted the unanimous invitation of the Independent church, Gornal, Staffordshire, to become their pastor; and entered on his charge, Lord's-day, August 24th, 1845.

The second Congregational church in Southampton, assembling at Albion Chapel, have given a unanimous invitation to the Rev. Thomas Pullar, of Gateshead, formerly

of Glasgow, to become their pastor, which he has accepted, and will commence his labours there (D. v.) on the first Lord's-day of the present month.

On Tuesday, August 5th, 1845, the Rev. William Stead, late of Airedale College, was ordained pastor of the Congregational church at Embleton, Northumberland. The introductory discourse was delivered by the Rev. George Richards, of Zion Chapel, Alnwick, in which he gave a clear and scriptural exposition of a church of Christ formed on New Testament principles, illustrative of the principles of Independency. The Rev. George Clarkson, of Rothbury, proposed the usual questions, received Mr. Stead's confession of faith, and afterwards offered up the ordination prayer with the imposition of hands. The Rev. Archibald Jack, A.M., of North Shields, gave an impressive charge to the minister, and afterwards addressed the people on their duties as a church towards their pastor. The whole of the services were listened to by a large and attentive audience, and it is to be hoped will be followed with the blessings of the great Head of the church.

## MISCELLANEOUS INTELLIGENCE.

### PRELIMINARY MEETING FOR CHRISTIAN UNION.

BEFORE this article is in the hands of our readers, a most important meeting will have commenced its session in the Lecture Room of the Medical Hall, Liverpool, when probably more than two hundred ministers, and other brethren, of all the evangelical denominations of our land, will assemble, to consult and pray for union on Protestant and scriptural grounds, and for such a union as may promote the internal peace and strength of the true church of Christ, and its outward honour and extension. This will be noble and blessed. There will be infirmity—there will be imperfection—there may be comparative failure; yet the meeting will be blessed. It will certainly accord with the mind of Christ. Some powerful feeling of the need of union, some strong desire of union, some perception of circumstances favourable to union, must have wrought to bring forward the project to the point it will have gained in the meeting of the assembly at Liverpool. Will it there fall? Will it advance no farther? Will it add another to the many discouragements of former ineffectual attempts at Christian union? God forbid! let every Christian heart respond. Let many a voice of prayer go up on high for a blessing on this design. Let every true disciple of Jesus remember his prayer for union, and look not so much at the obstacles in the way of climbing this "Hill Difficulty," as at the power, the prospect, the joy, the health that will be gained when its summit is reached.

A happy conjunction of influences has brought about this important result, and it may not be without advantage to glance at the progress which the question of Christian union has made. To Sir C. E. Smith, Bart., belongs the honour of having taken the first step towards the discussion of the question, by the gift of a prize of £105 for the best essay on the subject. This produced the valuable volumes of Dr. Hoppus and Dr. Harris.

In May, 1842, the Rev. J. A. James addressed a proposal to the Secretaries of the Congregational Union, through the pages of this Magazine,\* for "A General Protestant Evangelical Union," which called for approving remarks from several correspondents, and which led to the introduction of the whole subject at the autumnal meeting of that body in Liverpool, October, 1842.

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\* Congregational Magazine, 1842, pp. 458—462.

The principle having been cordially approved, was committed to the Secretary of the Union to correspond without delay with various religious bodies and churches, in the United Kingdom, and elsewhere, "in order to ascertain their views of the desirableness and practicability of obtaining a general and united manifestation of attachment to the evangelical principles of Protestantism." That correspondence was undertaken, and led to the ever-memorable meeting for "Christian Union," held at Exeter Hall, June the 1st, 1843.

The subject was not overlooked in Scotland. At a meeting of various denominations, held in Edinburgh, to celebrate the Bicentenary of the Assembly of Divines, in the following July, the subject was introduced by the late Dr. Balmer, and happily followed by the efforts of Mr. John Henderson, a liberal member of the United Secession Church, who devoted, we believe, £210 to obtain a volume of "Essays on Christian Union, by various Ministers."

The introduction of the Maynooth Endowment Bill to Parliament was regarded as another call to union, and at the public meeting of Protestant deputations held at Exeter Hall, May 1st, 1845, it was moved by the Rev. D. R. Stephens, Baptist minister at Newport, Monmouthshire; seconded by J. Heald, Esq., of Stockport; supported by the Rev. T. D. Gregg, of Dublin; and resolved,

"That in this crisis of our affairs it becomes us, as a considerate assembly, to look to the future; that it is quite evident to this Meeting that the Protestant interests of this empire are put in a state of fearful peril by the course proposed to be pursued by Her Majesty's Government; and that, connecting this circumstance with the position of the same sacred interests elsewhere, it becomes their indispensable duty to arrange for a great Protestant Confederation, to embrace this country, the Continent, and the world, that, by sympathy, correspondence, and united action, they may be prepared to meet a powerful and united foe."

As, however, the Anti-Maynooth Committee had necessarily been a politico-ecclesiastical body, it was judged best that our honoured brethren in Scotland, who were so alive to the subject, should take the lead in the business.

As the design was known in May last, Mr. James introduced it to the notice of the last annual Assembly of the Congregational Union; and, upon the representations of the design given by that beloved brother, the following resolution was moved by the Rev. Thomas Smith, A.M., of Sheffield, seconded by the Rev. Samuel Thodey, of Cambridge, and unanimously adopted:—

"IV. That this Assembly has heard with great interest the statements now given explanatory of a design for convening a conference of ministers, and other brethren, of every evangelical denomination, and from all parts of the world, for consideration of the present state, prospects, and wants of the great Protestant cause throughout Christendom, and would desire to be represented at any meeting which may be held for preliminary discussion and arrangement."

Subsequently the following appointment of delegates from the Assembly was proposed by Edward Baines, Jun., Esq., of Leeds, seconded by the Rev. Edward White, of Hereford, and agreed to unanimously:—

"X. That the following brethren be appointed delegates from this Assembly, pursuant to Resolution No. IV., to the anticipated meeting for discussions and arrangements, preliminary to a general conference of evangelical Protestants, and that these brethren be requested to report to the Annual Meeting at Manchester the result of any preliminary conference they may attend:—The Rev. J. Burnet, chairman of this assembly, Rev. J. A. James, Rev. Dr. Raffles, and Rev. A. Wells, Sir C. E. Smith Bart., Sir J. B. Williams, Knt., LL.D., Samuel Fletcher, Esq., and Samuel Morley, Esq. Subsequently the Rev. James Sherman was added by unanimous vote of the meeting."

Besides our own denominational Union, we are happy to hear that the Wesleyan Conference has appointed a large deputation; as also the Anti-Maynooth Committee and the Congregational Board of London. Forty ministers of various denominations are expected from Scotland, and we rejoice to learn that Ireland and Wales will also be represented.

The following is the invitation to this preliminary meeting now addressed by brethren of various denominations in Scotland to their brethren of all evangelical communions in England, Wales, and Ireland. We give the document entire, with all the names subscribed, because, cheered by hope that some permanent union—delightful, extensive, and practical, will grow out of these auspicious beginnings, we are desirous to place on accurate and authentic record in our pages the men and the measures that originated, under God, the blessings thus hereafter to be enjoyed by the church and the world.

" TO THE EVANGELICAL CHURCHES OF ENGLAND, WALES,  
AND IRELAND.

*" Glasgow, 5th August, 1845.*

" Dear Brethren,

" You are aware of the Proposal which has emanated from various quarters, that a great Meeting of Evangelical Christians, belonging to different Churches and Countries, should be shortly convened in London, to associate and concentrate the strength of an enlightened Protestantism against the encroachments of Popery and Puseyism, and to promote the interests of a Scriptural Christianity. To us it appears, that a Preliminary Meeting, comprising Delegates from the various Denominations in Great Britain and Ireland, might with advantage, be held this Summer in some town of England. This subordinate measure has been submitted to various sections of Scottish Christians, and has obtained their cordial approbation; and most of the Subscribers to this Letter have been appointed to use their best endeavours for carrying it into execution. We earnestly and respectfully invite you to join us in this movement. On your co-operation its success depends; for, if limited to Scotland, it would be diminutive and ineffectual.

" As to the objects of the Preliminary Meeting, we think it better not to speak with precision. The Delegates will shape their own course; and we abstain from any remarks or suggestions which might appear to invade the freedom of their deliberations. To any, however, who might object to the want of a defined aim, we would reply, in general, that there is, in our opinion, no want of work for the combined energies of Evangelical Christians. The very fact of meeting together would be a feast of charity to themselves, and would present an exemplification of brotherhood highly honouring to their religious profession. By this would all men know that they were Christ's disciples, because they loved one another.

" When assembled, they might engage together in devotional exercises,—hear stirring appeals as to their individual and collective duties—indicate the basis of the greater Meeting to be called at their instance—and organise, or even set on foot, a series of measures, whether by Books, Tracts, Lectureships, or otherwise, for diffusing through all European countries a Scriptural knowledge of the salvation of Christ, and exploding the sceptical and superstitious systems so lamentably prevalent, by which the doctrines of the Cross are expressly denied, or buried under a heap of inventions and delusions.

" We sincerely hope that you will give the subject your favourable consideration. It is easy to anticipate objections; but the end in view is too great and good to be abandoned on slight grounds.

" We suggest the 1st of October as the day of meeting, and Liverpool as the

place. It may be presumed that the important business to be transacted, will occupy not less than three days.

"We are, dear Brethren,

"Yours cordially,

*Free Church*—Thomas Chalmers, D.D., LL.D.; P. M'Farlan, D.D.; Robt. S. Candlish, D.D.; W. Cunningham, D.D.; Robt. Buchanan, D.D.; M. Mackay, LL.D.; John Smyth, D.D.; Thomas Guthrie; James Begg; W. M. Hetherington, LL.D.; Adam Cairns; David Carmint; Breadalbane; D. Brewster, LL.D.; R. J. Brown, Professor of Greek, Marischal College, Aberdeen; Alex. Campbell, Monzie; Andrew Bonar; Graham Speirs; William Brown; N. Stevenson; James Bridges.

*United Secession Church*—John Brown, D.D.; H. Heugh, D.D.; James Harper, D.D.; David King, LL.D.; John Henderson; David Anderson; James Peddie; Jo. Young; John Eadie, LL.D.; John Robson, D.D.; James Mitchell.

*Original Secession Church*—Thomas M'Crie; Robt. J. Watt; William White.

*Relief Church*—William Lindsay, D.D.; J. S. Taylor; William Brodie; Hugh Macfarlane.

*Reformed Presbyterian Church*—And. Symington, D.D.; William Symington, D.D.; A. M. Rogerson; John Macleod; Jas. M'Gill; Wm. Anderson; James Reid.

*Congregationalists*—Ralph Wardlaw, D.D.; Alex. W. Knowles; C. H. Bateman; William P. Paton; John Small.

*Baptist Church*—Alex. Macleod; James Paterson; William Innes; Robert Kettle.

"P.S. It is intended that the Conference be held in the Assembly Rooms, Great George-street, beginning on Wednesday, the 1st October, at twelve o'clock."

The preceding circular having been sent to the Anti-Maynooth Committee, the following admirable letter was prepared and adopted by them; and which will explain to our readers some of the objects contemplated by the meeting.

"Exeter Hall, London, Sept. 5th, 1845.

"Dear Sir,

"The Central Anti-Maynooth Committee have requested me to thank you for the communication which you transmitted to me on the 27th August, signed by many highly-honoured brethren in Scotland, inviting us to depute some of our number to attend a Protestant Conference for the Three Kingdoms to be held at Liverpool in October, preparatory to a larger Evangelical assembly from all parts of Christendom, to be held in London, if the Lord permit, in 1846.

"I have already informed you how cordially the Committee accept the invitation. They have resolved to depute not less than twelve persons to attend the Conference on their behalf. The names of the clergymen, ministers, and others, who will constitute the Deputation, shall be transmitted to you with as little delay as possible.

"I have already conveyed to you a suggestion for extending the invitation to all classes of Christians holding the Head in Scotland; and, in the same spirit, I am confident that you will allow me to refer to one phrase in the circular. I allude to the mention of 'the encroachments of Popery and Puseyism.' There is not one member of our Committee who is not opposed to every form of anti-evangelical error; but, while hoping that a movement against Popery will tend to open the eyes of the public to the evils of analogous systems, we feel that against Popery alone the present movement of Evangelical Christians should be directed. The Conference will include many members of the Established Church of England; and it will strike you at once, that it would not be becoming in them to make a specific and systematic assault on evils in their own communion, in conjunction with other Christians. We

may all unite against the common apostacy; but in regard to errors in particular churches, the wisest and best course appears to be, that each community should resolve to contend with increased vigour against its own. You will not, I am certain, misunderstand the motive of these observations on the single passage in your circular which seemed to us to require some notice on our part, while we joyfully receive and comply with the invitation which it conveys.

"The Central Anti-Maynooth Committee consider, that the contemplated assembly of 1846, while it will neither exert nor claim the slightest authority over the European and American churches, may yet, under God, be the means of so combining the minds, and concentrating the energies of our brethren in various countries, as to lead to highly useful results to the interests of the Saviour's kingdom.

"Without in any way committing to any particular course those Christians who will take part in the ultimate, or in the preliminary Conference, I will briefly state the general objects to which we anticipate that their attention may be directed.

"I. The circumstances of the times demand from the true church of Jesus Christ an unanimous delivery of opinion as to the real character of the Papal system. That system is putting forth fresh vigour in various countries, and in none more than in our own; and it becomes an important question, whether the church has not failed in its duty of bearing an adequate and sufficiently combined testimony against the Romish apostacy. Would the Government and intelligent statesmen have lent themselves to the designs of the Papacy as they have done, if public opinion had been sufficiently enlightened on the subject? The language of the Reformers was unequivocal, and it is to be regretted that modern phraseology, and (it is feared) modern opinion should have considerably declined from the high standard of the sixteenth century. The Homily of the Church of England for Whitsunday says of the Romanist community, 'The state thereof is so far wide from the nature of a true church, that nothing can be more.' We anticipate, therefore, that the approaching assemblies will raise the question in the face of the Christian world, whether the Church of Rome is to be regarded, and if so in what sense, as a form of Christianity at all? The concentrated judgment of orthodox Christians upon this point, sustained by the authority of the Divine word, and promulgated through all countries where the Press in its various forms can convey it, cannot but conduce to the glory of God. It appears to this Committee, that it is high time that the compromise between truth and error, between Christ and Anti-Christ, should be brought to a termination, and that the question should no longer be held as doubtful, which of two antagonistic systems, claiming to be Christianity, is so in reality.

"II. But in order to a successful renewal of the protest against Rome of the sixteenth century, it appears to us expedient, not to say necessary, that the common principles of the true faith, and the general outline of the true church, should be exhibited by united Christians. These were regarded by Bishop Davenant, and the ether advocates of peace and union among the reformed churches in the seventeenth century, as contained in the Creed, commonly called the Apostles', the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer, as embodying the momentous facts, the essential duties, and the permanent subjects of prayer, on which all true Christians are agreed.

"The manifest union in faith and love of the evangelical churches, apart from uniformity of ritual and discipline, appears to be as indispensable to convict Rome of apostacy, as it is in harmony with the Saviour's prayer, and with the Divine purposes. There are principles so clearly laid down in the word of God, that they are essential to the sound Christianity, whether of an individual or of a church. Such are—the sufficiency of the inspired Scriptures as a rule of faith, and the duty of every man to examine them for himself; the blessed doctrine of the Trinity; the utterly depraved state of man by nature, and the necessity of vital conversion to



God; the freeness of salvation; the justification of all believers by faith alone in the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ; and their sanctification by the operation of the Holy Spirit. These are cardinal truths; and if these, developed by competent theologians, and expressed in simple language, could be upraised as the common standard of the churches, which are also agreed in the Divine institution and present obligation of baptism, the Lord's supper, and the Christian ministry, most evangelical congregations might be expected, without severing existing relations, to rally round it. How glorious would be such a spectacle! What a refutation of the superstitious unity of Rome! To render it, indeed, a loving, fervent, affectionate union, the Holy Spirit must be abundantly poured out. No human arrangements, no orthodox confessions, can supersede the necessity for His Divine work. But His operations might be confidently looked for, were the Churches humbly, penitently, and prayerfully to use the means for exhibiting their essential oneness. We believe, therefore, that this object should be one of those contemplated by the expected Conferences.

"III. But, while protesting against Rome, and designing to exhibit the oneness of the Church, the Central Anti-Maynooth Committee consider, that Christians ought also to endeavour to unite, as far as practicable, in disseminating Divine truth in countries where Romanism prevails. The labours of the brethren in France, Belgium, and Switzerland, might be aided through their own societies. The still more wonderful religious movements in Germany—a Country to which England owes its race, its religion, and its dynasty—might be judiciously promoted. And to turn to our own Country, in Ireland, the dissemination of the Word of God, and other simple forms of religious effort, might be undertaken in combination; while societies connected with evangelical communities might be aided, out of a common fund, to spread sound principles among our benighted countrymen. The most incontestable proof would by this means be afforded, that it was not owing to any lack of British affection or generosity, that the Protestant people of these realms have protested against contributing to the Endowment of Romanism.

"The Countries already named are all accessible to our efforts. If grace is given to the Churches to enter these open doors boldly and faithfully, they may subsequently see their way to extend their evangelical operations into the very centre of Romanism itself. Our brethren in the United States are actively engaged in a plan for introducing the Scriptures and scriptural principles into Italy, and especially into Rome. We consider that the Church will not have fulfilled its duty, till it shall, in some manner, have exerted its utmost efforts, in dependence on the Divine aid, to call upon every Romanist to come out of the great apostacy.

"IV. But in order that 'the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified,' throughout the earth, there is required a revival of the brotherly spirit of the Reformation; and in Roman Catholic kingdoms especially, a great extension of Religious Liberty. Aforetime in Europe, Protestant Governments, like those of England and Prussia, were accustomed to interpose their influence with the rulers of Roman Catholic countries, for the protection and enfranchisement of their *brethren of the Reformation*. But recent events plainly indicate that a decided change is taking place in the policy of Protestant countries, and that, under God, the main security of such as may come out of Babylon, will be found in the force of sanctified public opinion, and in the sympathy and co-operation of enlightened Christians. But in many Countries of Europe, that public opinion has yet to be created. Little is known of the unspeakable privilege of free access to God's Word; and, with it, of that inalienable birth-right of the soul, freedom of faith in that Word, and worship according to it,—or of the individual and direct responsibility of every man to God, in all that relates to the convictions of his conscience. The liberty of

worship, and the free use of the Holy Scriptures, need to be maintained, and the great arguments in favour of these sacred rights of man require to be addressed to the consciences of all men, through every available channel, in many lands. With purely political questions we wish not collectively to interfere; but freedom for Religion must be conceded, before Religion itself can triumph; and we regard it as a subject worthy of our united counsels.

"It is with such views that the Central Anti-Maynooth Committee have determined to accept your invitation from Scotland. We presume that you will invite the Anti-Maynooth Committee for Ireland, to promote the attendance of deputies from the sister Country; and that the principal religious societies of the United Kingdom will be requested to co-operate, so as to render the preliminary assembly of next October, a fair exhibition of the evangelical feelings of England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. At the same time, it strikes us as very important, that persons attending the Conference, should be considered as speaking their own sentiments, and not as committing the communities with which they are connected.

"In conclusion, our Committee wish to urge you to impress on all whom you can influence, the supreme importance of earnest, fervent, and unceasing prayer, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the God of patience and consolation would grant us to be like-minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus, that we may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, and strive together for the faith of the Gospel.

"Believe me, dear Sir, with sincere personal respect on account of the part you have taken in promoting the union of Evangelical Christians,

"Your faithful servant for the Saviour's sake,

"CULLING EARDLEY SMITH.

"John Henderson, Esq., Glasgow."

This document will close the public labours of the Anti-Maynooth Committee, as the meeting at Liverpool will complete the duties confided to it.

Some remarks have been made upon this letter in the *Patriot* newspaper, which betray great ignorance of the facts, and great peevishness and ill temper towards one who is an honour to our denomination, and whose amiable and consistent course deserves very different treatment from those journalists who profess to represent the sentiments of our body.

We have omitted to state that the meetings at Liverpool are expected to continue three days, October 1, 2, and 3; and that its conductors earnestly beg the prayers of all Christians to aid their deliberations.

#### ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We omitted to introduce our Article in the August number on Bartholomew's Day as from the pen of the Rev. T. C. Hine. A singular coincidence, which would be uninteresting to our general readers, makes this announcement locally desirable.

Errata in our September number.

Page 688, 7th line from bottom, for "the Rev. T. M. Necours," read, the Rev. T. M. Newnes.

Page 690, line 21—for "Besborough," read Desborough.

—line 23—for "Bothwell," read Rothwell.

—12th line from bottom,— "P. W. Jenkyn," read T. W. Jenkyn.

Page 694, line 28—for "than," read that.

Page 694, line 40—for "we do believe," read, we do not believe.